ACTS

OF THE

Associate Presbytery;

VIZ.

I. ACT concerning the DOCTRINE OF GRACE, wherein the said DOCTRINE (as revealed in the HOLY SCRIPTURES, and agreeable thereto set forth in our CONFESSION OF FAITH and CATECHISMS) is asserted and vindicated, from errors vented and published in some Acts of Assemblies of this church, passed in prejudice of the same.

II. ACT for renewing the NATIONAL COVENANT of SCOTLAND, and the SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT of the three NATIONS, in a way and manner agreeable to our present circumstances and circumstances in this period.

With an INTRODUCTION,

Discovering the rise and progress of the opposition to the Doctrine of Grace, and the reasons of making and publishing this act in vindication of the same.

GLASGOW:

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE INTRODUCTION.

Diſcovering the riſe and progreſs of the oppoſition to the Doctrine of Grace, and the reaſons of paſſing and publiſhing this act, in vindication of the ſame.

OPPOSITION to the revelation of the grace of God, is interwoven with the corrupt nature of man. There is nothing wherein the univerſal depravation of the human nature more evidently appears, than in deſpiſing and rejecting the grace of God, which bringeth ſalvation to all men: for, by the plan of ſalvation, as it is laid out and extended in the holy ſcriptures, the greateſt revenue of glory redounds to God; and therefore it is the greateſt evidence of enmity in the ſinner to ſlight the manifold wiſdom and unſpeakable love of God that ſhines therein. It would ſeem ſtrange to one, who knew nothing of the corruption of the human nature, that any ſhould refuſe the choiceſt bleſſings, for this reaſon, that they are freely given, and becauſe it is the will of God, that they may be freely received by thoſe who are wretched, miſerable, poor, blind and naked; yet ſo it is that ſinners, in theſe deplorable circumſtances, have in all ages, manifeſted the warmeſt oppoſition to the free grace of God through Jeſus Chriſt, wherever it has been revealed unto them; and this has been the ſpring of all the degeneracy and apoſtacy of the church, both under the Old and New Teſtaments.

When the Lord erected the Jews into a national church at mount Sinai, the moral law, as it was there publiſhed, and all the ſacrifices and typical ordinances which he inſtituted among them, were full of free grace and mercy and were plainly deſigned to lead men off from all their

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own doings for life, unto the doing and dying of the glorious Meſſiah, as the only ground of their juſtification and title to eternal life: but it is obvious from ſcripture, that the generality of the Jewiſh church contemned and rejected the grace of God, diſplayed in the types and ſhadows, promiſes and prophecies of that diſpenſation; therefore the Lord gave them up to their own hearts luſts, and they wandered in their own counſels; and ſo, before their captivity, they fell frequently into idolatry, and, after it, placed the whole of their righteouſneſs in the mere outward obſervance of the ceremonial law, together with their own traditions, as is evident from the repeated charges laid againſt the ſcribes and Phariſees by our Lord, when dwelling among us in the days of his humiliation; and accordingly the Spirit of God teſtifies againſt the great body of the Jewiſh nation, that being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, they ſubmitted not themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.

The ſame legal ſpirit appeared very early in the Chriſtian church. The natural bias that is in the heart of man unto juſtification by works of the law, diſcovered itſelf in the tenets and opinions, which were taught and vented by the falſe teachers in the very firſt age of Chriſtianity; as is manifeſt from ſeveral of the epiſtles of Paul, where in oppoſition to theſe falſe teachers, the doctrine of juſtification by the free grace of God, or by faith without the works of the law, is largely inſiſted upon. And, as this ſpirit of legaliſm was at the bottom of all the errors that ever infeſted the Chriſtian church; ſo we find it runs through the whole myſtery of iniquity, that has been vented and maintained by Romiſh Babylon, to the ruin of multitudes of precious ſouls.

When the Lord was pleaſed to bring about the reformation of this land from Popiſh darkneſs, it was by the means of preaching the goſpel doctrine of free grace, and juſtification through the imputed righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. This was the foundation and ground-work of the other ſteps of reformation in the worſhip, diſcipline and government of the houſe of God: the Lord's ſervant's being animated by faith's views of goſpel grace, were bold and valiant in ſetting up and defending

all the parts of the reformation, according to the pattern ſhewn in the word of God: and thus a *nation was born at once, and a people brought forth in one day.*

But the enemies of our reformation, envying the flouriſhing ſtate of this church, were indefatigible in contriving ways and means to ſully her beauty, and to bring her again under the yoke of bondage, from which ſhe had been relieved by ſuch a wonderful chain of adorable providences. Accordingly ſeveral years after the reformation, prelacy was introduced and the Arminian ſcheme, being hatched abroad and calculated to exalt the powers of corrupt nature, ſoon met with a favourable reception, about the beginning of the laſt century, from the prelatic party both in Scotland and England; who, as they were pointing plainly towards Rome, ſo they embraced the Arminian errors, as opening a more eaſy paſſage to that idolatrous church. Not to ſpeak of the keenneſs, whereby Laud's party in England propagated this doctrine, it is well known that the apoſtate prelates in Scotland at that time were moſt warm and zealous defenders thereof; as appears not only by the ſevere ſentence paſſed by that Antichriſtian court, the high commiſſion, whereof they were members againſt many of the Lord's ſervants and people, particularly, the act of baniſhment paſſed againſt that eminent ſervant of Chriſt, Mr. Samuel Rutherford, from his flock at Anwoth to Aberdeen, for writing againſt the Arminians at that time; but alſo, by the juſt cenſures paſſed by that memorable aſſembly at Glaſgow, Anno 1638, againſt theſe pretended biſhops, and ſome other miniſters who were deeply involved in the ſame defection; where, beſides many groſs ſcandals and immoralities it will be found, that many of theſe men were depoſed, and otherwiſe cenſured for teaching and venting Popiſh and Arminian errors as may be ſeen from the tranſactions of that aſſembly related in that excellent Latin hiſtory, entitled, *Hiſtoria motuum in regno Scotiæ.*

When the prelates, who were the ſtrenuous defenders of Arminianiſm, were thus juſtly cenſured in Scotland, they fled into England; where beſides their being the firſt authors of the civil war, they procured a large declaration to be ſent unto Scotland, in the kings name wherein that famous aſſembly 1638, is ſeverely condemned in the whole

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of their conduct and particularly, for inflicting cenſure upon Arminians, as this paper was juſtly condemned by the aſſembly that met at Edinburgh 1639, and afterwards by the eſtates of the kingdom, as a ſcandalous libel upon this church and nation; ſo, by the Lord's bleſſing upon the reformation of this church, which he then brought about by his mighty arm, the open defenders of Arminianiſm, durſt not ſet up their heads, during the whole time of that reforming period, till abjured prelacy was again reimpoſed after the reſtoration of king Charles II.

But although the Arminian doctrine had poiſoned multitudes both in Scotland and England, by means of the popiſh and prelatic party of thoſe times; yet, as the errors, held by Arminus and his followers, were condemned by the famous ſynod that met at Dort, anno 1619, and by this church, *anno* 1638, and by all the divines of any reputation for ſoundneſs, both abroad and at home; ſo, this pernicious ſcheme being ſo directly contrary to the ſcripture doctrine contained in the confeſſion of the reformed churches, few of the more ſober and ſerious in theſe lands were miſled thereby; until at length, a more refined, and, conſequently, a more dangerous ſcheme of Arminianiſm was hatched and vented in England, by Mr. Richard Baxter; which, as it came nearer to the legal terms that ſome time before had been uſed by divines of reputed orthodoxy, in explaining of goſpel-truth; ſo it quickly ſpread, like an overflowing flood, among thoſe of the Presbyterian perſuaſion in England, and gradually crept into many pulpits of Scotland, even after the revolution; partly out of zeal againſt the real Antinomians, and partly by reaſon of the great noiſe raiſed by ſome miniſters againſt the preachers of the Doctrine of Grace, as teachers of Antinomianiſm; and, by this means, the doctrine of the goſpel, quickly getting the name of a new ſcheme, became, almoſt every where, evil ſpoken of.

When matters, with reſpect to doctrine, came to ſo deplorable a ſituation in this church, that they who taught the abſolute freedom of the covenant of grace, and the unlimited grant that God hath made in his word, of Chriſt and ſalvation with him to the world of mankind, and ſuch like doctrines, were branded as venting a new

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ſcheme of divinity: it is no wonder that the church of Scotland ſhould grow worſe and worſe, and be left in the righteous judgment of God, to an open affronting of the truth of the goſpel, and conſequently of Chriſt himſelf, who is the ſubſtance of it, by the aſſembly that met *anno* 1717, when they diſmiſſed without cenſure a profeſſor of divinity, who had taught a ſcheme of Pelagian and Arminian errors mentioned and condemned in a former act of this Presbytery. And from that time forward there is the warmeſt oppoſition made to the DOCTRINE of GRACE whenever it came upon the field before the judicatories of this church, whereof there is ſome lamentable inſtances condeſcended upon in the following act.

From this ſhort account of the riſe and progreſs of the oppoſition to the DOCTRINE of GRACE, may be gathered the great hazard and danger that this church and land are in, of being over run with Paganiſm and infidelity; for, though the Lord has been pleaſed to make goſpel light break forth in ſome corners of the land, yet in many more places, the darkneſs is no leſs remarkably increaſed, and oppoſition to the truths of the goſpel is mightily abounding; yea the floodgates of legal and corrupt doctrine are ſo wide opened, particularly by many preachers and miniſters that have lately entered into the church as to threaten the utter extinguiſhing of any beams of light that have been ſhining amongſt us.

Many are the awful ſymptoms and evidences of the danger we are in this way. Such as (1.) The intolerable freedom that is uſed with the holy ſcriptures; ſome denying them in the bulk; others wreſting them to their own deſtruction; and others paſſing profane jeſts upon them; whereby that word is ſadly verified among us, 2 Pet. iii. 3.——*There ſhall come in the laſt days ſcoffers, walking after their own luſts.* (2) Socinian and Arminian doctrine is now in ſuch general requeſt, that ſome have ventured openly to recommend theſe principles, without being noticed by any of the judicatories of the church. Mr. William Wiſheart, principal of the college of Edinburgh, has recommended Dr. Scougal's life of God in the ſoul of man, upon which Mr. Whitefield's experiences are founded; a book calculated to lead off from faith in the righteouſneſs

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of Chriſt without us, to a righteouſneſs within us, and inward ſenſation as the ground of our pardon and acceptance before God. The ſaid Mr. Wiſhart has alſo recommended Dr. Whichcot's ſermons unto young miniſters and ſtudents; a book that is open and plain in favours of the Socinian and Arminian ſchemes. When a worthy miniſter of this church recommended the Marrow of Modern Divinity, a book deſigned to vindicate the DOCTRINE OF GRACE, in oppoſition to the Antinomian and Neonomian extremes, the aſſemblies *annis* 1720 and 1722 ſeverely animadverted upon it: but, when a ſcheme of Arminian and Socinian doctrine is now recommended, the judicatories take no manner of notice of it. Hence it follows, (3.) That miniſters have been encouraged to entertain their hearers with harangues upon moral ſubjects without ever mentioning the peculiar or ſupernatural truths of Chriſtianity, or ſhewing the connection that is between the duties of the law and promiſes of the goſpel; and conſequently, the people hear nothing from many of them but a ſyſtem of heathen philoſophy intermixed with Arminian tenets, inſtead of the myſteries of the goſpel; whereby multitudes have been prepared for the blind reception of that ſtrong deluſion at this day, whereby they have believed a lie. (4.) The moſt part by far of all the late writings, both upon the controverſy with the Deiſts, and that with the Arians, ſuppoſe the Arminian principles, as granted; ſo that in what is looked upon to be the faſhionable reading of the times, whatever hand the ſtudents turn unto, they muſt faſten upon Arminian principles, as out of debate; and yet this dreadful ſnare is ſcarce, if at all, taken notice of, or warned againſt by the moſt part of thoſe to whom the inſtruction of youth is now committed, nor yet by the aſſemblies of this church.

From what has been ſaid, it will eaſily appear to the unprejudiced, that the miniſters of the aſſociate presbytry were bound in duty to God, and to the preſent and ſucceeding generations, to paſs and publiſh the following act concerning the Doctrine of Grace: in regard,

1. The ſaid Doctrine has met with a great deal of oppoſition from the preſent judicatories, as hath been hinted above, and therefore, when truth is controverted and oppoſed,

poſed, it ought to be tranſmitted to the following generation with a ſolemn and peculiar teſtimony unto it.

2. The presbytery having now, for ſeveral years, obſerved with regret, that atheiſm and infidelity are upon the growing hand, occaſioned by the free and open paſſage which the judicatories have made for the ſpreading of legal and Arminian doctrine, they judged it their duty without farther delay, to mint at witneſſing for theſe great truths, which have been ſo particularly condemned and oppoſed in their day relating to the freedom of grace, both as to the purchaſe and application of redemption.

3. The aſſembly 1720 and 1722, having adduced our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, to ſupport the errors contained in their acts, it is therefore neceſſary to vindicate theſe our excellent ſtandards from the injuries done them by theſe aſſemblies.

4. As the government of the houſe of Chriſt is an hedge to the doctrine (for while the purity of diſcipline and government according to Chriſt's inſtitution is maintained, it will be an effectual check upon all the errors that may be vented in prejudice of the doctrine of his grace;) ſo, upon the other hand, when the purity of doctrine is corrupted, the purity of government cannot long ſubſiſt; of which the preſent judicatories gave a ſad and lamentable inſtance; their ſtated and tenacious oppoſition to the Doctrine of Grace ever ſince the year 1717, has opened the door to all theſe corruptions and defections with reſpect to the diſcipline and government of the church, which have come to ſuch a height at this day.

For theſe and the like reaſons, the Aſſociate Presbytry appointed a committee of their number to prepare a draught of an act concerning the doctrine of grace, vindicating and aſſerting the ſaid doctrine, as revealed in the holy ſcriptures and agreeably thereto ſet forth in our Confeſſion of Faith, and Catechiſms from the errors vented and publiſhed in ſome acts of the aſſemblies of this church, paſſed in prejudice of the ſame. And the ſaid draught having been laid before the presbytry, after ſerious deliberation and reaſoning thereupon, it was at a meeting of presbytry, at Edinburgh October 21. 1742. unanimouſly approven of, enacted, and ordered to be publiſhed. The tenor whereof follows.

ACT

ACT

OF THE

Associate Presbytery;

CONCERNING THE

DOCTRINE OF GRACE.

Wherein the said DOCTRINE (as revealed in the HOLY SCRIPTURES, and agreeable thereto, set forth in our CONFESSION OF FAITH and CATECHISMS) is asserted and vindicated, from the errors vented and published in some ACTS of the Assemblies of this church, passed in prejudice of the same.

AT Edinburgh, the twenty first day of October, one thousand seven hundred and forty two years. The which day and place, the ministers and elders associate together in a presbyterial capacity, being met in Presbytery; and taking to their serious consideration that though it has been the privilege of this church, ever since the reformation, to enjoy pure standards of doctrine, agreeable to the holy scriptures; particularly the large Confession of Faith, exhibited to the estates of parliament, *Anno* 1551, and by them ratified, *Anno* 1560 and afterwards sworn to in the national covenant, together with

ſeveral excellent catechiſms expreſſing the ſame doctrine as alſo, the Weſtminſter Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms now of public authority for many years, as moſt agreeable to the word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine of this church; and that though the whole land ſtands indiſpenſibly bound, by the oath of God, conſtantly to adhere unto and defend the doctrine contained in the confeſſions of this church, as God's undoubted truth grounded only upon his written word; yet there has been a manifeſt departure from the ſaid purity of doctrine, as formerly profeſſed in this church and land, particularly by the preſent judicatories of this national church, their tolerating and protecting the erroneous, ſupporting, and countenancing error, and their paſſing ſeveral acts in prejudice of, and contrary to the doctrine of grace of God, contained in the forecited Confeſſions and Catechiſms agreeable to the holy ſcriptures; whereby a God of truth is highly diſhonoured, the goſpel perverted, the whole land involved in the guilt of perjury and apoſtacy from the Lord, and conſequently the ſalvation of multitudes of ſouls manifeſtly endangered: and likewiſe conſidering, that the aſſemblies 1720 and 1722 adduce our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, in ſupport of the ſeveral erroneous propoſitions contained in the acts of theſe aſſemblies, relative to a book entitled, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*; whereby a blot and ſtain is caſt upon theſe excellent ſtandards, and many have been poiſoned with the legal doctrine contained in the ſaid acts, and propagated through the pulpits of Scotland under the maſk and covert of being agreeable to the word of God, and the foreſaid ſtandards;

And whereas this preſbytery, when they enacted and publiſhed their Act, Declaration, and Teſtimony, for the doctrine, worſhip, government, and diſcipline of the church of Scotland, and againſt ſeveral ſteps of defection from the ſame, both in former and preſent times, did upon the grounds and reaſons contained in the ſaid act, condemn the errors vented by Mr. Simpſon and Mr. Campbell which were either not noticed at all, or but ſlightly cenſured by the preſent judicatories; but by reaſon of the great variety of other matters contained in the ſaid act,

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and that a judicial teſtimony was then neceſſary without farther delay, the presbytery could not, at that time, enter into ſuch a particular enquiry into the ſeveral acts of aſſembly, that either darkned or directly impugned the doctrine of grace in the ſalvation of ſinners, as the importance of the ſubject did require: therefore they now find themſelves bound in duty and zeal for the glory of God, the vindication of his truth, as contained in the holy ſcriptures, and agreeable thereto, profeſſed in the public ſtandards of this church: as alſo for contributing what in them lies, through grace, to put a ſtop to the ſpreading of legal and Arminian doctrine wherewith the whole land is like to be overflown to the ruin of many precious ſouls, who, by the Lord's bleſſing upon this mean of his appointment, may come to be eſtabliſhed in the truth as it is in Jeſus; and farther conſidering, that all ranks are indiſpenſibly obliged by ſolemn covenant, ſincerely, really, and conſtantly, to endeavour, in their ſeveral places and callings, the preſervation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government; and in like manner, the extirpation of hereſy, ſchiſm, and whatever ſhall be found to be contrary to ſound doctrine, and the power of godlineſs: having promiſed and ſworn by the great name of the Lord our God, that they ſhall continue in the profeſſion and obedience of the foreſaid religion; particularly (as in the acknowledgment of ſins and engagement to duties) againſt the errors vented by the Independents, Antinomians, Arminians, Socinians, Sceptics, and Eraſtians, to which may be added Neonomians: THEREFORE, for the above and other weighty reaſons, the Aſſociate Preſbytery did, and hereby do, judge it their duty according to the powers given them by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as a judicatory of his houſe, to aſſert the truth from the holy ſcriptures, and our ſtandards of doctrine, concerning the free grace of God, in the ſalvation of mankind loſt: in oppoſition to the corrupt doctrine vented in ſome acts of aſſemblies, darkning or enervating the ſame. And to this they reckon themſelves the more warranted and obliged, in regard that the ſalvation of ſinners is manifeſtly endangered, by errors and miſtakes anent the nature

of faith, and God's gift of eternal life unto us, the compleat ſatisfaction of the glorious Surety, the abſolute freedom of the covenant of grace, and other important doctrines which are oppoſed and ſubverted by the acts of aſſembly after mentioned. For,

FIRST,

Although the judicatories ſhewed ſuch lenity towards Mr. Simpſon, that much of the time of three ſeveral aſſemblies, *Annis* 1715, 1716, 1717, was ſpent in labouring to ſcreen him from juſt cenſure, notwithſtanding of his having vented ſuch dangerous errors, as ſap the very foundation of all revealed religion; yet, when the doctrine comes upon the field, which tends to advance the freedom of grace, in oppoſition to man's natural powers of performing of that which is ſpiritually good it meets with a condemnatory ſentence at once. For the aſſembly that met *Anno* 1717, that ſame day in which they diſmiſſed the proceſs againſt profeſſor Simpſon in ſuch a ſuperficial manner, they condemn in the ſtrongeſt terms the following propoſition advanced by the preſbytery of Auchterarder, *viz.* That it is not ſound and orthodox to teach 'that we muſt forſake ſin in order to our coming to 'Chriſt, and inſtating us in covenant with God,' for, the general aſſembly 'declare their abhorrence of the foreſaid 'propoſition, as unſound and moſt deteſtable.' Act 10. Aſſem. 1717.

The preſbytery of Auchterarder were at that time endeavouring to put a ſtop in their bounds, to the ſpreading of Arminian and Baxterian doctrine, which was then vented in many places of the kingdom; and therefore they agreed on ſome propoſitions, anent the freedom of grace whereof the above was one, expreſſing the ſenſe and meaning of our confeſſion in oppoſition to legal doctrine; and reſolved to require ſatisfaction of young men, as to theſe points, before they ſhould be licenſed by them, in order to know their ſoundneſs anent the doctrine profeſſed in the church of Scotland, yet the aſſembly did not only ſeverely cenſure the conduct of that presbytery, but condemn the above propoſition in the foreſaid manner; and this they did, even before calling that presbytery, and hearing what they had to offer in ſupport thereof.

of; and having condemned it, they then ordered that Presbytery to compear before the commission of assembly in August thereafter, and give an account of what they meant by the above proposition. Accordingly, by act 8. 1718. it appears, that the said Presbytery of Achterarder compeared before the commission, and satisfied them as to their meaning; notwithstanding whereof, "The com-"mission did admonish them, and discharged them to use "that expression in time coming: and the brethren of "Auchterarder did engage to observe this their prohibi-"tion. The general assembly approves of the actings of "the said commission in this matter, and for the vindica-"tion of the brethren of the Presbytery of Auchterarder "they appointed these presents to be printed among their "public acts."

The associate Presbytery cannot but with regret observe the manifest and glaring partiality of the judicatories for many years past, with respect unto doctrine, shewing their pleasure, in several instances, against those who vented or published any thing in support of the scripture doctrine, concerning the freedom of grace, in opposition to the Neonomian scheme; and, upon the other hand, screening and protecting those, who have vented opinions and tenets evidently favouring Legal and Arminian doctrine; and this hath paved the way for the other defections that presently prevail; so it is error in doctrine, corruption in discipline, and tyranny in government, wherewith the present judicatories are justly loaded, that has now rendered communion with them most unsafe for any that would desire to cleave to the reformed and covenanted principles of the church of Scotland. Was there any thing like an equal warmth shewn against any, or all the errors vented by Mr. Simson, as in the above case? No; the assembly 1717, are at a deal of pains in their act to palliate and excuse them; the worst they say of them is, that they are "expressions that bear, and are used by adversaries in a bad and unsound sense." But, when the above proposition comes upon the field, although it has a manifest tendency to advance the freedom of grace in the application as well as the purchase of redemption, and was levelled against the legal doctrine of the times,

yet

yet the aſſembly declare their abhorrence of it, as unſound and moſt deteſtable.

Now, if this propoſition is to be abhorred as unſound and moſt deteſtable, namely, that it is not ſound and orthodox to teach, that we muſt forſake ſin in order to our coming to Chriſt, and inſtating us in covenant with God; then, according to that act of aſſembly, it would be ſound doctrine to teach, That a ſinner muſt forſake his ſin in order to his coming to Chriſt, or, which is the ſame thing, That it is a man's duty to forſake his ſin, in order to his coming to Chriſt; but this is evidently contrary to ſcripture: For,

(1.) Although it is the unqueſtionable duty of the creature to forſake and abandon whatever is forbidden by the law of his Creator: yet, ſince life and immortality are brought to light by the goſpel, the law binds to the obſervation of that order and connexion of duties, which is laid out in the word of grace; and it is plain that the firſt and leading duty, required in the law, upon the revelation of the grace of God in the promiſe of the goſpel, is, 'to believe that report; for without faith it is impoſſible 'to pleaſe God,' Heb. xi. 6. 'He that believeth on the 'Son hath everlaſting life; he that believeth not the Son 'ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,' John iii. 36. Hence it follows, that according to ſcripture, every act of the ſoul, as performed by a perſon before ſaving faith or coming to Chriſt, is ſin; for whatſoever is not of faith is ſin, and therefore cannot be a forſaking of ſin.

(2.) As the above act of aſſembly is contrary to the ſcripture order and connexion of duties, ſo likewiſe it is contrary to that order of gracious operation held forth in ſcripture: for our forſaking of ſin (being a branch of true repentance, importing the purification of the heart, and the exerciſe of love, which is the fulfilling of the law) is in ſcripture expreſly declared to be a fruit of faith, which faith is the ſoul's coming to Chriſt; and conſequently to maintain, That we muſt forſake ſin in order to our coming to Chriſt, is as much as to ſay, we muſt have repentance, purity of heart, and love, in order to our believing in Chriſt: whereas, on the contrary, the Lord hath declared in his word, that faith worketh by love; that he purifies the heart of his people by faith, and has promiſed, that they

they ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced, and ſhall mourn for him. According to the aſſemblies doctrine, our forſaking of ſin, which is the removal of the ſoul's diſeaſe, muſt be at leaſt commenced or begun, in order to our coming to him who is the phyſician; and that we muſt repent of our ſin in order to our coming to him, who is exalted to give repentance as well as forgiveneſs of ſins: whereas the Spirit of God, in ſcripture, has declared that God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus hath ſent him to bleſs us, in turning away every one of us from his iniquities: and that ſinners are called and invited to look and come to Chriſt for ſalvation both from ſin and wrath, and this without regard unto any previous qualifications in them. This coming is indeed inconſiſtent with a reſolution to go on in ſin: yet it is plain that no ſinner can waſh himſelf before he come to the fountain opened for ſin and uncleanneſs; whereas the aſſembly have inverted this order, and have ſaid upon the matter, that we muſt be holy, or ſo and ſo qualified, in order to our coming to Chriſt, or having a vital union with him; which is the very ſoul of Neonomian and Arminian doctrine. According to ſcripture, all gracious actings of the ſoul, whereof the forſaking of ſin is an eminent one, flow from that virtue and influence, which is derived from Chriſt the true vine, and that in a way of faith's union with him; ſince without him, or ſeparate from him, we can do nothing; and therefore it is vain to pretend to any gracious, evangelical or acceptable act, but by virtue of grace and ſtrength derived from Chriſt, or until the ſoul come to Chriſt, and be united to him, as the living root, and fountain of all gracious influence.

(3.) As forſaking of ſin is no ſmall part of converſion, ſo the above act of aſſembly evidently tends to exalt man's natural powers, and his own ability to convert himſelf, or prepare himſelf thereunto; and thus it greatly favours the Pelagian doctrine on this head, expreſly contrary to ſcripture, which declares, that naturally we are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; without ſtrength, yea, that our mind is enmity againſt God.

Wherefore the presbytery did, and hereby do upon the grounds and reaſons above-mentioned, CONDEMN the

the following propoſitions, as unſound doctrine. (1.) That (notwithſtanding the foreſaid goſpel order and connection of duties) mankind ſinners muſt forſake their ſins, in order to their coming to Chriſt, and being inſtated in covenant with God. (2.) That a natural man can of himſelf forſake his ſin; or, that he can receive any ſtrength from Chriſt, to enable him to forſake ſin in a ſpiritual and evangelical manner, until by the power of the Spirit of Chriſt working faith in him, he come to Chriſt, is united to him, and thus created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works. (3.) That any good or commendable qualifications are required or expected of ſinners, in the goſpel call or offer, in order to their coming to Chriſt, and being inſtated in covenant with God. All which propoſitions are contrary to the doctrines held forth from the holy ſcriptures in our Confeſſion of Faith, chap. ix. § 3. "Man by his fall into "a ſtate of ſin, hath wholly loſt all ability of will to any "ſpiritual good accompanying ſalvation; ſo as a natural "man, being altogether averſe from that good, and dead "in ſin, is not able, by his own ſtrength to convert himſelf, or to prepare himſelf thereunto." And chap. xiv. § 1. where the principal acts of ſaving faith are ſaid to be, "accepting, receiving, and reſting upon Chriſt alone for "—— ſanctification," whereof forſaking ſin is a branch.

And the Presbytery acknowledge, aſſert and declare, that it is the duty of all, upon the revelation of Chriſt in the goſpel, and without looking for any previous qualifications in themſelves, inſtantly to believe in him for ſalvation, both from ſin and wrath; and that, in ſo doing only, they will be made, in a goſpel manner, to mourn for ſin, forſake it, and live unto righteouſneſs; ſo that it is not poſſible for any man, of himſelf, to forſake his ſins, nor is it inconſiſtent with the divine method of grace held forth in the goſpel, that a ſinner ſhould receive ſtrength and grace to forſake his ſins, or actually to exerciſe goſpel-repentance, until he is determined and enabled by the power of the Spirit of faith, to look or come to Chriſt, the Prince and Saviour exalted to give repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins.

Therefore upon the grounds and reaſons aforeſaid, the Presbytery exhort and warn all under their inſpection to be aware of every doctrine that has a tendency to pervert the

the goſpel order in the manner above condemned; or to exalt corrupt nature unto ability of will to any ſpiritual good accompanying ſalvation: as the above doctrine, of forſaking our ſin in order to our coming to Chriſt, manifeſtly doth; in regard a natural man can no more forſake his ſin, or qualify himſelf for the grace of God, than the Ethiopian can change his ſkin, or the leopard his ſpots, according to the doctrine contained in the foreſaid paſſages of our Confeſſion, and in our Larger Catechiſm, Q. 32.

SECONDLY,

Oppoſition to the goſpel truth did farther appear, when in the year 1720, the aſſembly took occaſion from the re-printing a book entitled, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, with a preface by a worthy miniſter of this church now deceaſed, to give a more deep wound to the goſpel doctrine of free grace, by condemning ſeveral precious and important truths, through the ſides of that book, in the 5th act of the ſaid aſſembly. And although upon a repreſentation given in by ſome miniſters to the aſſembly 1721 laying open the dangerous conſequences of the ſaid act, the aſſembly that met *anno* 1722, aſſerted the truth, concerning ſome points of doctrine, in the expreſs words of our Confeſſion and Catechiſms, yet the ſaid act of aſſembly 1720, not only ſtands unrepealed, but its authority as a ſtanding act in full force, is maintained and confirmed by act 7th, Aſſembly 1722, entitled, act concerning doctrine, confirming and explaining the acts 5th and 8th of the general Aſſembly *anno* 1720 In the ſaid act, 'The 'general Aſſembly finds, that the ſaid aſſembly 1720, in 'theſe acts had no deſign to recede from the received doc- 'trine of this church, nor by them have done injury to 'truth nor given countenance to error,——and conſidering 'that the brethren's deſire, that the act 1720 ſhould be 'repealed is unjuſt, the aſſembly does refuſe the ſame.' And in regard the ſaid act 1722 is expreſly ſaid to be in vindication of the above two acts of aſſembly 1720, and for wiping off, what they call injurious aſperſions, caſt upon them by the brethren, in their repreſentation it plainly follows, that whatever truths may ſeem to be aſſerted by

the aſſembly 1722, they can be underſtood in no other ſenſe, than will agree with the acts of aſſembly 1720.

Wherefore, although this presbytery are far from putting that book entitled, The Marrow of Modern Divinity, or any other private compoſure, upon a level with our approven ſtandards of doctrine; or to vindicate every expreſſion in that book, or any other private writing, as abſolutely faultleſs: yet in regard the aſſembly have ſingled out the ſaid book, of all others that have been publiſhed, and paſſed ſuch a peculiar ſentence againſt it, ſtrictly prohibiting and diſcharging all the miniſters of this church to recommend the ſaid book, and requiring them to warn their people not to read or uſe the ſame; tho' the difference between the law and the goſpel, and between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, as alſo the true way of attaining goſpel holineſs, be therein ſet forth in a very clear light. And likewiſe, in regard that many of the leſs judicious may be impoſed upon, to believe that all and every one of the poſitions, condemned in the foreſaid acts of aſſembly, are damnable hereſies; when the aſſembly 1722, 'do ſtrictly prohibit and diſcharge all the miniſters of this church to uſe by writing, printing, preaching, catechizing or otherwiſe teaching, either publickly or privately, theſe or any of theſe poſitions above mentioned, in their act, or what may be equivalent to them or of like tendency, under the pain of the cenſures of this church conform to the merit of their offence.' and farther conſidering that, under the colour of condemning the ſaid book, ſeveral important and precious truths are deeply wounded, and the purity of doctrine contained in our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, obſcured and perverted: THEREFORE, upon the above and other weighty reaſons, this presbytery judge it their duty, to endeavour the preſervation of the purity of doctrine and that the ſame may be faithfully tranſmitted to ſucceeding generations, by vindicating the profeſſed principles of this church from the injuries done them, in the above mentioned acts, and aſſerting the truth from the holy ſcriptures, and our ſtandards of doctrine, in oppoſition to the errors and miſtakes contained in the ſaid acts.

The firſt head of doctrine, as claſſed by the aſſembly

1720,

1720, in their fifth act, concerning a book entitled, The Marrow of Modern Divinity, is concerning the nature of faith. But, becauſe of the relation that there is between faith and the gift or grant that God has made of Chriſt unto mankind in the goſpel promiſe. and the dependency that faith has thereupon, it will be neceſſary in order to the more diſtinct opening up the nature of faith, to take notice,

I. Of the injuries done to truth by the foreſaid aſſembly 1720, act 5. under the head.

Of univerſal Atonement and Pardon.

Under this head, the following paſſages are quoted by the aſſembly, Marrow, &c. p. 106. 'Chriſt hath taken 'upon him the ſins of all men. The author's words are 'Chriſt, as man's ſurety,—according to that eternal and 'mutual agreement, that was betwixt God the Father and 'him,——put himſelf in the room and place of all the 'faithful, Iſa. liii. 6. *And the Lord hath laid on him the 'iniquity of us all.* Then came the law, as it is the co-'venant of works, and ſaid (N B. here the author cites 'Luther's words) I find him a ſinner, yea, ſuch an one 'as hath taken upon him the ſins of all men, therefore let 'him die——and ſo the law——ſet upon him, and killed 'him, and by this means was the juſtice of God fully ſa-'tisfied, his wrath appeaſed, and all true believers acquit-'ted from all their ſins,' &c.

The next paſſage quoted by the aſſembly is p. 119. 'The Father hath made a deed of gift and grant unto all 'mankind, that whoſoever of them all ſhall believe in his 'Son, ſhall not periſh, *&c. i. e.* (whoſoever believes or is 'perſuaded that Chriſt is his, for this muſt be the ſenſe 'according to the former paſſages.) Hence it was that 'Chriſt ſaid to his diſciples, go and preach the goſpel to 'every creature under heaven; that is, go and tell every 'man without exception, that here is good news for 'him, Chriſt is dead for him.' The author adds, and if he will take him and accept of his righteouſneſs, he ſhall have him. Here the author brings in the ſimilitude of a good king, cauſing a proclamation to be made through his

whole kingdom, that all rebels and baniſhed men ſhall ſafely return home; becauſe, at the ſuit and deſert of ſome dear friends of theirs, it hath pleaſed the king to pardon them, 'Certainly, ſays the author, none of theſe rebels 'ought to doubt, but he ſhall obtain true pardon for this 'rebellion, and ſo return home, and live under the ſha-'dow of that gracious king.' Then follows the quotation of the aſſembly, 'Even ſo our good king, the Lord of 'heaven and earth, hath, for the obedience and deſert of 'our good brother Jeſus Chriſt, pardoned all our ſins,' It is added by the author, 'and made a proclamation 'throughout the whole world, that every one of us may 'ſafely return to God, in Jeſus Chriſt, wherefore, ſays 'he, I beſeech you make no doubt of it, but draw near 'with a true heart in full aſſurance of faith, Heb. x. 22. The aſſembly likewiſe quote p. 127, 128 where the author is exhorting and encouraging ſinners, to come to Chriſt or believe in him, notwithſtanding of their ſins and the aggravations of them, from theſe ſcriptures, "This is "a faithful ſaying and worthy of all acceptation that Chriſt "Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners; the whole "need no phyſician, but they that are ſick, he came "not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance," the aſſembly's judgment on the above paſſages, is as follows. 'Here is aſſerted an univerſal redemption as to pur-'chaſe, contrary to John x. 10, 15, 27, 28, 29. and xv. '13. and xvii. Titus ii. 14. Conf. chap. iii. § 6. chap. 'viii. § 8. Larger Cat. Q. 59.

There is nothing in the above paſſages, that in the leaſt countenances univerſal redemption as to purchaſe, a doctrine which the Presbytery rejects and condemns, as contrary to the ſcriptures, and places of our Confeſſion and Catechiſms quoted by the aſſembly. Nor can the author of the Marrow be juſtly cenſured for venting any ſuch error; for he plainly teacheth through the whole of this book, that Chriſt repreſented and ſuffered for none but the elect, as p. 108. 'Chriſt put himſelf in the room and place 'of all the faithful;' by which he underſtands the elect, as he expreſſy declares in the firſt ſentence of his preface, 'Jeſus Chriſt the ſecond Adam, did, as a common perſon, enter into covenant with God his Father, for all the

'the elect, that is to say, says he, all those that have or 'shall believe on his name,' Whereas the universalists contend, that God, in sending of Christ, had no respect to some, more than to others, but destined Christ for a Saviour to all men alike.

As the author has expressly declared himself for a particular redemption and representation; so neither will the above passages, quoted by the assembly bear the charge of an universal redemption as to purchase. The first passage from the Marrow, p. 108. 'Christ hath taken upon him 'the sins of all men,' is a part of a sentence quoted from Luther on the Galatians, and is sufficiently guarded against the charge of universal redemption as to purchase, by what the author says immediately before, and after the said passage, as above. As to the next condemned position, 'God the Father hath made a deed of gift and grant 'unto all mankind, that whosoever of them all shall believe 'in his Son, shall not perish, but have everlasting life,' will indeed bear a sufficiency of worth and merit in the sacrifice of Christ, for the salvation of all men, and the removal of all legal bars that stood in the sinners way; and that Christ crucified is the ordinance of God for the salvation of mankind, in the use making of which only they can be saved; and consequently a full warrant to gospel ministers to proclaim these glad tidings unto every man, and a warrant to all and every one to believe these glad tidings, with particular application to their own souls: but all this will not infer an universal atonement or redemption as to purchase. Neither will the following words infer any such charge, 'Go and preach the gos-'pel to every creature under heaven, that is, Go and 'tell every man without exception, that here is good 'news for him, Christ is dead for him, and if he will 'take him, and accept of his righteousness he shall have 'him,' it is manifest from the book itself, that the author's design in quoting the above passage from Dr. Preston's treatise of faith, is not to determine concerning the extent of Christ's death, but to discover the warrant that sinners have to believe in Christ, namely, the unlimited offer and free gift of Christ, to every man in the world, which necessarily supposes, that Christ crucified

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is the ordinance of God for ſalvation to mankind, as diſtinguiſhed from fallen angels; and therefore the obvious meaning of the expreſſion muſt be, Tell every man that Chriſt is dead for him, *i. e. for him to come to*, or *believe* on for ſalvation, even as it might be ſaid to the man ſlayer of old, that the city of refuge was prepared and open for him to fly to, that he might be ſafe: and this is what the author of the Marrow, according to ſcripture, declares that every man ought to be perſuaded of, namely, that Chriſt is the ordinance and gift of God, for ſalvation to him in particular; which is quite contrary to the doctrine of the Arminians, who deny a particular perſuaſion to be in faith, upon the free offer in the goſpel, as to the perſon's own ſalvation.

Since then it appears, from the ſenſe and meaning of the author, that the above paſſages cannot be interpreted as favouring univerſal redemption as to purchaſe there muſt be ſomething elſe intended by the condemnatory ſentence of the aſſembly. And it will be obvious, from the tenor and ſtrain of the aſſembly's act, that under the miſapplied title of univerſal redemption as to purchaſe, They condemn the univerſal and unlimited offer of Chriſt unto mankind ſinners, as ſuch. For although the aſſembly 1722 ſeems to own, that the revelation of the divine will in the word affords a warrant to offer Chriſt unto all, and a warrant to all to receive him; yet they can own that warrant, only in a conſiſtency with their notion of faith, that is, a warrant only for the elect, or thoſe who are ſo and ſo qualified to receive Chriſt, but they do not own that mankind ſinners, as ſuch however ſinful and miſerable, have any ſuch warrant: and conſequently, the revelation of the divine will in the word, making ſuch a gift of Chriſt, to the world of mankind ſinners, as ſuch, as affords a warrant to offer Chriſt unto all without exception, or to preach the goſpel to every creature and a warrant to all to receive him; and the ſovereign grace that has made this grant or deed of gift, not to devils, but to men; are incroached upon and injured by the acts of both aſſemblies, *Annis* 1720 and 1722.

The ſcripture expreſly aſſerteth, John iii. 27. 'A man
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'can receive nothing except it be given him from above;' and therefore the receiving of Chriſt neceſſarily preſuppoſeth a giving of him. There may be indeed a giving of Chriſt where there is no receiving, as this is the great ſin of the generality of the hearers of the goſpel, who will not come unto him that they may have life; but in no caſe, could there be a receiving of Chriſt for ſalvation, if there were not a giving of him before; or which is the ſame thing, a revelation of him in the word, affording a warrant for ſinners, as ſuch, to receive him. Now, this deed of gift or grant made to all mankind, in the word, is the very foundation of our faith, and the ground and warrant of the miniſterial offer, without which no miniſter could have authority to preach the goſpel to every creature, or to make a full free, and unhampered offer of Chriſt, his grace, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation to all mankind to whom they have acceſs in providence.

This deed of gift or grant of Chriſt in the word unto mankind ſinners, as ſuch, is expreſly ſet forth in ſeveral texts of ſcripture. Iſa. ix. 6. 'Unto us a child is born 'unto us a Son is given,' John iii. 16 'God ſo loved the 'world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſo-'ever believeth in him ſhould not periſh but have everlaſt-'ing life,' Chap. iv. 32. 'My Father giveth you the true 'bread from heaven.' Acts iv. 12.—For there is none o-'ther name under heaven given among men whereby we 'can be ſaved.' 1 John v. 11. 'This is the record that 'God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his 'Son.' Rev. xxii. 17.—'Whoſoever will let him take of 'the water of life, freely.' From which ſcriptures the following truths are evidently clear. (1.) Altho' the purchaſe and application of redemption be peculiar to the elect, yet the warrant to receive Chriſt is common to all, as they are ſinful men and women of Adam's family, Prov. viii. 5. 'Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the ſons 'of men. (2.) The giving mentioned in the above texts is not to be underſtood of a giving into poſſeſſion, which is peculiar to them only who believe; but it is a giving by way of offer, whereupon one may take poſſeſſion; or ſuch a giving as warrants a man to believe, or receive the gift,

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and therefore muſt be inferior to actual believing; even as the Manna behoved to be given, or rained down, before it could be taſted or fed upon: and thus, 'God gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth on him ſhould 'not periſh, but have everlaſting life:' from whence it follows, that Chriſt is the Saviour of the world, and his ſalvation a common ſalvation, Jude, ver. 3. So that mankind loſt have a common intereſt in him, which fallen angels have not; it being lawful and warrantable for us, not to them, to take poſſeſſion of Chriſt, and the whole of his ſalvation. (3.) The perſons to whom this grant and offer is made, are not the elect only, but mankind conſidered as loſt. For the record of God being ſuch a thing as warrants all to believe on the Son of God, as appears from the above ſcriptures, it is evident, that there can be no ſuch warrant to believe on the Son of God, as appears from the elect; as the offering of a gift to a certain ſelect company can never be a warrant for all men to receive, or take poſſeſſion of it. This will further appear if it be conſidered, that the great ſin of unbelief lies, in not believing the 'record that God hath given us eternal life.' Unbelief doth not conſiſt in a mere disbelieving of that propoſition, That God hath given eternal life to the elect; for the moſt deſpairing unbeliever may be perſuaded hereof, and their unbelief of it adds to their anguiſh and torment: but they do not ſet to their ſeal that God is true; on the contrary, they make God a liar, in not believing the record of God, even that he hath given unto them eternal life in his Son Jeſus Chriſt; as hereby they deny the faithfulneſs of God in that record, and his being indeed in earneſt in that gift and grant of Chriſt, made unto ſinners as ſuch, in the goſpel: they ſlight and deſpiſe the authority of a God of grace, commanding them to give this anſwer of a particular applying faith, unto the offer of his grace in his word, and his call to receive the ſame; and ſo flying in the face of God's record and teſtimony, they deſervedly periſh in unbelief, ſeeing the kingdom and gift of God was brought near to them in the offer of the goſpel, and they would not take it.

The above doctrine concerning the gift of Chriſt in the word, unto mankind ſinners, is likewiſe from the holy

holy ſcriptures aſſerted in our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, particularly, Conf. chap. vii. § 3. 'He freely 'offereth unto ſinners, life and ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt; 'requiring of them faith in him, that they may be ſaved, 'and promiſing his holy Spirit, to make them willing and 'able to believe.' Where it is plain, that the offer of life and ſalvation, is unto mankind, conſidered as ſinners; and that therefore ſinners, as ſuch have a warrant to believe, or receive the unſpeakable gift of God according to the ſcriptures quoted in the Confeſſion, Mark xvi. 15, 16.——'Go ye unto all the world, and preach the 'goſpel to every creature. He that believeth and is bap-'tized ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not, ſhall be 'damned.' John iii 16. 'God ſo loved the world,' &c. And the ſame doctrine is alſo taught, Larg. Cat. Q. 63.

Wherefore the presbytery did, and hereby do, for the grounds and reaſons above mentioned, acknowledge, declare and aſſert, that God the Father moved by nothing but his free love to mankind loſt, hath made a deed of gift and grant of his Son Jeſus Chriſt unto mankind, in the word that whoſoever of them all ſhall receive this gift by a true and lively faith, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life: or, which is the ſame thing, that there is a revelation of the divine will in the word, affording a warrant to offer Chriſt unto all mankind without exception, and a warrant to all freely to receive him however great ſinners they are, or have been; and that this gift is made to mankind only, and not to fallen angels according to the doctrine held forth from the ſcriptures and our Confeſſion above quoted.

And the presbytery hereby reject and condemn the following tenets and opinions, contained in or couched under the foreſaid acts of aſſembly. (1.) That the free, unlimited and univerſal offer of Chriſt in the goſpel, to ſinners of mankind, as ſuch, is inconſiſtent with particular redemption; or, that God the Father his making a deed of gift unto all mankind, that whoſoever of them all ſhall believe on his Son, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life infers an univerſal atonement, or redemption as to purchaſe. (2.) That this grant or offer is made only to the elect, or to ſuch who have previous quali-

lifications commending them above others. Which doctrines are quite contrary to the paſſages of ſcripture, and our Confeſſion of Faith, above quoted. In the next place,

II. *Concerning the nature of faith.*

The aſſembly 1722 do not only take notice of the definition of faith in the Marrow, without mentioning the other paſſages quoted by the aſſembly 1720, and by them condemned under that head: which might ſeem to give ground to apprehend that the aſſembly 1722, had paſſed from any vindication of what the aſſembly 1720 had done in condemning theſe and other paſſages and quotations, as contrary to the holy ſcriptures, our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms; eſpecially when they ſay, 'That 'the ſaid paſſages are condemned only in ſo far as they 'import the ſaid erroneous opinions, aſcribed unto them.' Yet as truth was never in any age, condemned under the notion of truth, but of error: and whereas the title of the act of aſſembly 1722 ſhews that it is deſigned for confirming as well as explaining the act 1720, and that not only is there no honour done to condemned truth, by any acknowledgement of an error in the management of the ſaid aſſembly 1720, but their act continues to ſtand in full force among thoſe deſigned for public uſe: upon theſe and the like grounds, the presbytery find that the truth contained in theſe paſſages, is not only left bleeding but has received a farther wound by the ſaid aſſembly 1722. Wherefore, though the presbytery do not find it expedient to inſiſt on every particular expreſſion or propoſition condemned by that aſſembly 1720. Yet they judge it neceſſary, for the vindication of truth, and as a mean of tranſmitting it in its purity unto after ages, to take notice of ſome of the propoſitions condemned by the ſaid aſſembly; particularly, p. 118. 'there is no 'more for him, *viz.* man) to do, but only to know and 'believe that Chriſt hath done all for him.' The paſſage relative to this ſubject in the ſaid page ſtands thus, 'All 'the covenant that believers are to have regard unto for 'life and ſalvation is the free and gracious covenant that 'is betwixt Chriſt, or God in Chriſt, and them. And, in

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'this covenant, there is not any condition or law to be 'performed, on man's part, by himself; no, there is 'no more for him to do, but only to know and believe 'that Christ hath done all for him ——Here you are to 'work nothing, here you are to do nothing, here you 'are to render nothing unto God; but only to receive 'the treasure, which is Jesus Christ, and apprehend him 'in your heart by faith;——so shall you obtain forgive-'nes of sins, righteousnes and eternal happines,——not 'by doing, but by receiving. Nothing here cometh be-'twixt but faith only apprehending Christ in the promise.' Then the following words, p. 119. which immediately follow what is above, are particularly cited as erroneous: 'This then is perfect righteousnes (these words are here 'omitted by them, to hear nothing, to know nothing, to 'do nothing of the law of works but) only to know and 'believe, that Jesus Christ is now gone to the Father, and 'sitteth at his right-hand, not as judge, but as made un-'to you of God, wisdom, righteousnes, sanctification, and 'redemption.'

The next passage condemned by the assembly is quoted by the author from Dr. Preston on faith, Marrow, page 120. 'For as much as the holy scripture speaketh to all 'in general, none of us ought to distrust himself, but be-'lieve that it doth particularly belong to himself.' They also refer to several other passages of the Marrow, without condescending upon the expressions that relate to the nature of faith. But the doctrine contained in the above passages, and likewise in the passages referred to by the assembly, in so far as they respect the nature of faith, will be illustrated by what shall be said in vindication of the author's account of justifying faith as quoted by the assembly from page 119. 'wherefore as Paul and Silas said to 'the jailor, so say I unto you, believe on the Lord Jesus 'Christ, and thou shalt be saved, that is, be verily persuad-'ed in your heart, that Jesus Christ is yours, and that you 'shall have life and salvation by him; that whatsoever 'Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for 'you.' The judgment of the assembly 1720 upon this head is as follows, 'This notion of saving faith appears con-'trary to scripture, Isa. l. 10. Rom. viii. 16. 1 John v. 13.

'and to Confeſ. chap. xviii. § 1, 3, 4. and to larger ca-
'techiſm, Queſt. 81. 172. all which paſſages ſhew, that
'aſſurance is not of the eſſence of faith; whereas the paſ-
'ſages cited from the Marrow, &c. appear to aſſert the
'contrary making that ſaving faith commanded in the goſ-
'pel, a man's perſuaſion that Chriſt is his and died for him,
'and that whoever hath not this perſuaſion or aſſurance
'hath not anſwered the goſpel call, nor is a true believer.

The general aſſembly *anno* 1722, in their 7th act confirming and explaining the above act of aſſembly 1720, vindicate the ſaid act upon this head, and particularly condemn the author of the Marrow for making that to be the juſtifying act of ſaving faith, 'A man's being perſuaded 'that Chriſt is his, and that he ſhall have life and ſalvati-'on by him, and that whatſoever Chriſt did for the re-'demption of mankind, he did it for him.' And all the account which that aſſembly give of faith is as follows, 'That a belief and perſuaſion of the mercy of God in 'Chriſt, and of Chriſt's ability and willingneſs to ſave all 'that come unto him, is neceſſary unto juſtifying faith.'

The presbytery judge it their duty to enquire ſomewhat particularly into the nature of faith, above deſcribed; in regard that a right notion of the nature of faith as revealed in the holy ſcriptures, and agreeably thereto ſet down in our ſtandards of doctrine is ſo neceſſary to the ſalvation of a ſinner, and that the ſame have been ſo much darkened by the aſſemblies of this church. For although the aſſembly 1722 ſeems to refuſe the charge of excluding from the nature of faith its appropriating act, yet it is impoſſible to vindicate them from it; in regard they ſpeak of no other aſſurance in faith, but perſuaſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt, and of Chriſt's ability and willingneſs to ſave all that come to him, which is a perſuaſion that devils and reprobates may have. And in agreeableneſs to this view of faith, they condemn the aſſurance which the author of the Marrow advanceth, when he makes that to be the juſtifying act of faith, 'A man's 'being perſuaded that Chriſt is his, that he ſhall have life 'and ſalvation by him, and that whatſoever Chriſt did for 'the redemption of mankind, he did it for him. Which, 'ſays the aſſembly, is contrary to the texts of ſcripture,

and

'and paſſages of our Confeſſion and larger Catechiſm cit-
'ed by the aſſembly 1720.'

But it will be obvious to any who conſiders theſe places of ſcripture, and paſſages of our Confeſſion and larger Catechiſm, quoted by the aſſembly, that they ſpeak directly of the aſſurance of ſenſe, or reflection; whereby believers are certainly aſſured that they are in a ſtate of grace, upon the evidence of theſe marks which the Lord has given of his own work in the ſoul; and not of the aſſurance which is in faith, in the direct act thereof, and which is founded upon the word allenarly. For the queſtion here is not concerning the preſent ſtate of the perſon, which he is called to examine, according to the rules of God's word; the believer being called to examine himſelf, whether he be in the faith, that in the uſe of appointed means he may grow up to the full aſſurance of his being in a ſtate of grace, which ſhall iſſue in compleat and eternal ſalvation; and the unbeliever or natural man being called to examine himſelf that he may be ſo far from believing that he is in a gracious ſtate, that he may be perſuaded of the quite contrary, or that he is at preſent in a ſtate of condemnation and wrath, ſo as he may be convinced of the neceſſity of believing on the Son of God, who is come to ſeek and to ſave that which is loſt. But the queſtion is concerning the nature of that faith, which all the hearers of the goſpel are called unto, and which the ſcripture plainly deſcribes to be a believing in God, and a truſting in his ſalvation, a receiving of Chriſt, a believing the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life, that he will be our God, and that we ſhall be his people; and ſo a calling him our Father, our husband our God, upon the warrant of his own word of grace. Believers, indeed, may be frequently in the dark as to the reality of their faith, and their preſent ſaving poſſeſſion of eternal life; and there is nothing in the Marrow denying or oppoſing this, yea, on the contrary, it is plainly aſſerted: but there is a great difference between the aſſurance of our ſtate of grace which reſpects the ſtate we are in already, and the aſſurance of the promiſe of ſalvation, or, an aſſured faith of righteouſneſs and ſalvation in Chriſt Jeſus, as held forth to every ſinner of Adam's race, to whom the goſpel comes,

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to be received and applied by them, for their own benefit according to that awful caution, Heb. iv. 1. 'Let us 'therefore fear, leſt a promiſe being leſt us of entering into 'his reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it,' *viz.* by unbelief, as is clear from the context. For by this aſſurance or perſuaſion of faith, and confidence in a promiſing God in Chriſt, we take poſſeſſion of a ſalvation as preſented to us in the promiſe, and thus we enter into reſt, Heb. iv. 11. But that aſſurance ſpoke of in the articles of our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, cited by the aſſembly, is an aſſurance that the faith which we have, is indeed the faith of God's elect; or that we are in a gracious ſtate the iſſue whereof ſhall be in full and compleat ſalvation; which aſſurance is founded upon the evidence of the reality of our faith, by comparing it with the marks thereof in ſcripture, the connexion ſtated in ſcripture between theſe evidences and ſalvation, and the teſtimony of the Spirit, ſhining on his own work in the ſoul, and witneſſing with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God. From all which it follows, that the paſſages of ſcripture and our ſtandards, quoted by the aſſembly, do by no means condemn the aſſurance which is in the direct act of faith, or the appropriating perſuaſion of faith, correſponding to the gift of Chriſt in the goſpel to every ſinner in particular. And ſince the above act of aſſembly plainly doth this, when it is therein expreſly denied to belong to the juſtifying act of faith, 'A man's being perſuaded that Jeſus Chriſt is his 'and that he ſhall have life and ſalvation by him; and that 'whatſoever Chriſt did for the redemption of mankind, he 'did it for him.' It is therefore neceſſary to vindicate this account of juſtifying faith as agreeable to the holy ſcriptures, and our ſtandards of doctrine; while the excluding an appropriating perſuaſion from the nature of faith, tends effectually to ſhut the doors of acceſs unto the Lord Jeſus, which God has opened, by the grant that he has made of Chriſt in the goſpel to ſinners of mankind, in excluſion of the angels that fell.

That the general nature of faith, as it is oppoſite to unbelief or doubting conſiſts in a perſuaſion of the reality of what is teſtified, is what cannot be well refuſed and it can as little be reaſonably denied, that where the teſtimony

ny to be believed is a promiſe of good to be communicated a man's faith of that teſtimony neceſſarily includes his believing the certain accompliſhment of that promiſe to him, and his confidence in the perſon who has given the promiſe, that he will do as he has ſaid. And it is no leſs evident, that when an offer is made in the word of grace, to be received by faith, a perſon does not by faith receive that which is offered, unleſs he believe it is his, by virtue, or upon the warrant of that offer made of it to him. And ſo, if a king ſhall make a proclamation of a pardon and indemnity to rebels; and his ſervants, by warrant from him ſhall ſay to all the rebels in his kingdom. To you is this proclamation of grace ſent; a man muſt ſurely either believe the pardon of his own crime of rebellion in particular, or elſe reject the king's proclamation of grace. Neither will it avail that the man believes in general, that there is pardon proclaimed to rebels in general; this they may believe who need it not, as being loyal ſubjects: and this they may alſo believe who reject it, and continue in their rebellion. Yet the particular perſuaſion above-mentioned is that which the aſſembly here denies to belong to the nature of the juſtifying act of faith; and thereby do really turn juſtifying faith unto that popiſh general faith abjured by our national covenant; or they make it a faith to be built, in whole or in part, upon ſomething wrought in, or done by us; whether our act of believing or repenting, or what elſe needs not here be inſiſted on.

That juſtifying faith has in it an appropriating perſuaſion, or a man's being perſuaded that Chriſt is his in particular, is further evident from the following reaſons. (1.) when a man's conſcience is truly awakened and convinced by the Spirit of God as a ſpirit of conviction, the man then ſees himſelf in particular bound under the curſe; the law accuſing and condemning him in particular, ſaying, Thou haſt ſinned, and therefore thou art curſed; for 'curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,' Gal. iii. 10. And therefore faith, whereby the blood of Jeſus is apprehended and improven for cleanſing the conſcience from guilt, and looſing that bond of the curſe, muſt appropriate and apply Chriſt, as made a curſe for the ſinner in particular

cular, to deliver him from the curſe of the law: otherwiſe the goſpel revelation and offer of Chriſt could not be found ſuitable to the man's particular caſe; neither would the free gift be found to be as full unto juſtification, as the offence through the law was unto condemnation; which were contrary to Gal. iii. 13. 'Chriſt hath redeemed us 'from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us; for 'it is written, curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Rom. v. 18.—21. 'Therefore as by the offence of one, 'judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even ſo, 'by the righteouſneſs of one, the free gift came upon all 'men to juſtification of life. For, as by one man's diſobe-'dience many were made ſinners; ſo by the obedience of 'one, ſhall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law en-'tred that the offence might abound; but where ſin abound-'ed, grace did much more abound; that as ſin hath reign-'ed unto death, even ſo might grace reign through righte-'ouſneſs unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.' And here it may be obſerved that as a man having only a gene-ral faith of the law, as condemning ſinners in general, will eaſily reſt in a general faith of the goſpel, or of Chriſt's willingneſs and ability to ſave ſinners, or to ſave them that come to him; ſo one brought by divine convincing power to a ſpecial faith of the law, as what particularly is directed againſt him for his condemnation, ſuch a perſon's conſcience cannot be ſatisfied, nor will it abſolve him, or he be purged from guilt, till he has got the ſpecial faith of the goſpel, or of the mercy of God in Chriſt, as reaching to him in particular: or be made to believe in particular for himſelf, that Chriſt is his, and that he ſhall have life and ſalvation by him.

(2.) A man's being perſuaded that Chriſt is his, is ne-ceſſary to anſwer the call or offer of the goſpel according to the deed of gift or grant that God has made of Chriſt in the word. Now, ſalvation is offered to every one in particular, that hears theſe glad tidings, Acts ii. 39 'The 'promiſe is unto you:' and therefore it is certain that faith which is the anſwer of the ſoul to the call of God in the goſpel, muſt lay hold on ſalvation for the perſon in par-ticular. For ſuppoſe that the offer of the goſpel be to all in general; yet, if a man is not influenced by the holy

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Spirit to appropriate to himself the common salvation, or what did lie before in common, in the gospel offer, he cannot be said to receive or close with Christ as offered therein. Wherefore the assembly by denying this appropriating persuasion to be in the nature of faith, fly in the face of the scriptures of truth, Acts iii. 26 *Unto you first God hath raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.* Isa. xlv. 22. *Look unto me and be saved, all the ends of the earth.* Which scriptures, and many others that might be quoted to this purpose, plainly require an appropriating act of faith from every one, without which there can be no answering the testimony of God therein revealed. Doth the testimony of God run into such terms. *Unto you is the word of this salvation sent, the promise is unto you whosoever will let him take?* Then the act of faith, corresponding to such a testimony, must certainly be an appropriating persuasion, *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness.* And this no way contradicts what is frequently found, in the sad experience of the believer, who may want the comfort of his faith for a long time, and have sad mixtures of darkness and unbelief attending its exercise, so as to doubt of the reality of his faith, or that it is of a right kind. For still doubting can no more be said to be in the nature of faith, because it frequently takes place in the believer, by reason of prevailing unbelief and indwelling sin, than darkness can be said to be in the nature of the sun, because he is sometimes eclipsed; for faith and doubting are in their own nature opposite; and therefore though a true believer is not at all times assured of his being presently in a state of grace, and capable thence to draw the conclusion, that he shall be saved; but may wait long before he obtain this assurance, according to our Confession and Catechisms; yet this says nothing against that man's being persuaded that Christ is his, according as Christ is held out and made over in the promise unto him And further, if the assembly, by condemning the appropriating persuasion of faith, thereby mean to limit and restrict the object of the external offer of Christ unto the elect only, then this is also plain contrary to scripture, Prov. viii. 4. 'Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is

'unto the ſons of men,' Acts. xiii. 47. 'I have ſet thee 'to be a light to the Gentiles, that thou ſhouldſt be for 'ſalvation unto the ends of the earth,' Mark xvi. 15. 'Go 'ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every 'creature.'

From all this it is evident, that the faith of the operation of God, muſt anſwer and correſpond to the teſtimony and record of God, which is the foundation of it: ſo that when he ſays unto us as ſinners, *I am the Lord thy God*, it is our duty to ſay, *This God is our God for ever and ever*; or which is the ſame thing, to be perſuaded that Chriſt is ours, and God our God in him. This is farther evident if it be conſidered.

(3.) What is the Lord's name revealed to us? We cannot but deny his name without this appropriating perſuaſion, that he is ours; for his name is JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, *The light of the Gentiles*, Thus he ſpeaks to the whole viſible Church, I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD: yea his name is *Salvation to the ends of the earth*. And, as he commands to proclaim his name, and preach this goſpel to every creature; ſo the anſwer of faith, which correſponds to this teſtimony and record of God as the foundation of it muſt be, He is Jehovah my righteouſneſs, my light, my ſalvation, the Lord my God; otherways we refuſe to own him by that name by which he has revealed himſelf to us, and do thus deny his name.

(4.) The command of God doth further evince this truth, that it is the indiſpenſible duty of every hearer of the goſpel thus to believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, even to be verily perſuaded that Jeſus Chriſt is his. For in the preface to the ten commandments, God makes, over himſelf to ſinners as their God and Redeemer; and as all the commandments are directed to every one in particular, ſo the firſt commandment, *Thou ſhalt have no other gods before me*, requires every one to know and acknowledge the Lord to be his God and Redeemer. On this head we are taught, *Larger Cat.* Queſt. 104. That our truſting in God is the ſuitable exerciſe of that acknowledging of him as the only true God and our God, which is there required. And this is a clear evidence, that there can be no truſting

truſting in God without faith's perſuaſion of his being our God: whence, according to the word of God and our received ſtandards, there can be no truſting in Chriſt without faith's perſuaſion that Chriſt is ours, the great God our Saviour, Iſa. xii. 2. *Behold God is my ſalvation; I will truſt and not be afraid.*

(5.) The appropriating act of faith is further illuſtrated from the covenant relation betwixt Chriſt and the whole viſible church, which in ſcripture, is commonly ſet forth under the ſimilitude of a marriage relation betwixt husband and wife; as, Iſa. liv. 1. 'More are the children 'of the deſolate, than the children of the married wife;' where the church of the Jews is ſaid to be married to the Lord; and hence, apoſtaſy from this worſhip, doctrine, and laws to which they are bound by covenant, is called adultery and whoredom, Ezek xvi. Hoſ. i. and in many other places. Thus we find, when the Lord would reclaim a backſliding church from their defections and apoſtacies, he is pleaſed, in a way of ſovereign grace, to urge them thereunto from the conſideration of this marriage relation betwixt him and them; as Jer. iii. 1. 'Tho' thou haſt play-'ed the harlot with many lovers, yet return again unto 'me:' and ver. 14. 'Turn, O backſliding children, ſaith 'the Lord, for I am married unto you.' Now, the anſwer of faith which God challanges, is ver. 4. 'Wilt thou not 'from this time, cry unto me my Father, thou art the 'guide of my youth?' And when he promiſes to make his grace ſufficient for them to this end, it is in terms of appropriation, ver. 19.—'And I ſaid, thou ſhalt call me, my 'Father, and ſhalt not turn away from me:' And ſo, when they actually turn to the Lord they take up their relation to him by covenant, as the leading motive of their return by faith, ſaying, as in ver. 22.—'Behold we come unto 'thee for thou art the Lord our God.' Indeed this appropriation of faith juſt correſponds unto the promiſe or grant of grace made to the viſible church as the echo to the voice, Zech. xiii. 9.—'I will ſay, it is my people: And they 'ſhall ſay, the Lord is my God;' and in this way, the ſoul is 'betrothed unto him for ever, in righteouſneſs, in 'judgment, in loving kindneſs and in tender mercies.'

The aſſembly, moreover, deny, that it belongs to the

juſtifying act of faith, a man's being perſuaded that he ſhall have life and ſalvation by Chriſt: but there can be no true faith without this perſuaſion in ſome meaſure or degree. For, faith is a believing the promiſe, and this is the promiſe that he hath promiſed us, even eternal life: it is a believing the record, and this is the record 'that 'God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his 'Son.' Hence, this perſuaſion, that we ſhall have life and ſalvation by Chriſt, is the ſame thing with a believing on the Son, or a reſting on him for ſalvation. It is evident that none can believe on Chriſt, truſt in him, or reſt on him for ſalvation, without ſome degree of perſuaſion, that they ſhall have life and ſalvation by him, viz. a ſalvation from ſin as well as from wrath: and accordingly, we find the ſaints of God in ſcripture, expreſſing themſelves in the terms of this perſuaſion; Acts xv. 11. 'We believe that 'through the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall be 'ſaved; Micah vii. 7 —'I will wait for the God of my ſal-'vation:' ſo that, without this perſuaſion, that we ſhall have life and ſalvation by Chriſt, we do not ſet to our ſeal that God is true, nor give that anſwer of faith, which the Lord points out, as the only ſuitable anſwer unto his call of *looking unto him for ſalvation.*

The third part of the deſcription of faith condemned by the aſſembly is, 'That whatſoever Chriſt did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for you.' But this branch of the perſuaſion of faith the apoſtle affirms, when he ſays, Gal. ii. 20.—'I live by the faith of the Son of God who 'loved me and gave himſelf for me.' It is certain, that what Chriſt did for the redemption of mankind, was his obedience unto the death in their room; and this his doing and ſuffering is that ſurety-righteouſneſs, which as the ſecond Adam, he has wrought for us, and for the ſake of which the Lord is well-pleaſed. Now this perfect righteouſneſs is brought near to every one of us in the goſpel, even to the ſtout-hearted and far from righteouſneſs, and is laid in Zion as the foundation of our acceptance with God, and hope of eternal life and ſalvation; ſo that this perſuaſion whatſoever Chriſt did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for us, muſt in connexion with the former, enter into the nature of that faith, which anſwers the

call and revelation of God in his word: and, accordingly we find the faith of the operation of God corresponding herewith, expreſſed Iſa. xlv. 24. 'Surely ſhall one ſay, 'in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.'

Upon the whole, the aſſembly by condemning the above deſcription of faith, have both condemned the ſcripture account of the true nature of faith, and alſo the ſcriptural order, in which faith appropriates or cloſes with its object: for the firſt thing to be believed, or to be perſuaded of, upon the revelation of the grant that God has made of Chriſt unto mankind ſinners in the word, is, that *Chriſt is ours*; upon which there will follow according to the meaſure of faith, a perſuaſion, That 'we ſhall have life and ſalvation, by him, and that 'whatſoever he did for the redemption of mankind, he 'did it for us.'

This account of the nature of faith, is the ſame with what is contained in our approven ſtandards of doctrine before the year 1647. Palatine Catechiſm (taught in this and other reformed churches.) *Queſt.* 'What is true 'faith? *Anſw.* It is an aſſured affiance kindled in my heart 'by the Holy Ghoſt, by which I reſt upon God, making 'ſure account of that forgiveneſs of ſins, everlaſting righ-'teouſneſs and life is beſtowed, not only upon others, but 'alſo upon ME, and that freely by the mercy of God, for 'the merit and deſert of Chriſt alone.' Old Confeſſ. Art. iii. 'Regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy 'Ghoſt, working in the hearts of the elect of God an aſſur-'ed faith in the promiſe of God, revealed to us in his word 'by which faith we apprehend Chriſt Jeſus, with the gra-'ces and benefits promiſed in him.' Unto which agrees the catechiſm of the famous Mr. James Melvil, in anſwer to that queſtion, What is faith? *Anſw.* 'It is my ſure 'belief that God both may and will ſave me in the blood 'of Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe he is almighty and has promiſed 'ſo to do.' And it muſt be obſerved, that the real agreement and harmony between the more ancient and latter way of deſcribing faith, is declared, by the *acts of Aſſembly*, 1647 and 1648, receiving and approving the *Weſtminſter* Confeſſion and Catechiſms, in which it is expreſly

expreſly aſſerted, That the ſaid Confeſſion and Catechiſms are in nothing contrary to the received doctrine of the church: Which they would not have ſaid, if they had not thought that the defining of faith, by a receiving and reſting upon Chriſt alone for ſalvation, as he is offered to us in the goſpel, did imply, that fiducial act or appropriating perſuaſion, whereby they ordinarily deſcribed faith before that time. However, our Confeſſion and Catechiſms are clear enough upon this head, Conf chap. xiv. ſect 3. 'faith is different in degrees, weak or ſtrong—growing 'up in many to the attainment of full aſſurance, through Chriſt.' (*N. B.* Faith is here aſſerted to differ in many, not as to aſſurance, but as to the fulneſs of aſſurance) and here they cite Heb. vi. 11. and x. 22, which ſcriptures ſpeak of the aſſurance of faith, and not of ſenſe. Larg. Cat. Queſt. 72. 'Juſtifying faith is a ſaving grace, 'wrought in the heart of a ſinner by the Spirit and word 'of God, whereby he—not only aſſenteth to the truth 'of the promiſe of the goſpel, but receiveth and reſteth 'upon Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, therein held forth, for 'pardon of ſin, and for the accepting and accounting of 'his perſon righteous in the ſight of God for ſalvation:' Which they found on Phil. iii. 9. and Acts xv. 11. Queſt. 73. 'Faith juſtifies a ſinner——only as it is an inſtrument 'by which he receiveth and applieth Chriſt and his righ-'teouſneſs.' Queſt. 170 ——'By faith they receive 'and apply unto themſelves Chriſt crucified, and all 'the benefits of his death.' Queſt. 189. 'The preface of 'the Lord's prayer (contained in theſe words, *Our Fa-'ther which art in heaven,*) teacheth us, when we pray, 'to draw near to God with confidence of his fatherly 'goodneſs and our intereſt therein' And ſhorter Cat. Queſt. 86. Faith in Jeſus Chriſt is a ſaving grace, where-'by we receive, and reſt upon him alone for ſalvation, as 'he is offered TO US in the goſpel. Where it is evident, that though the offer TO US be mentioned laſt, yet it is to be believed firſt.

Wherefore, the presbytery did, and hereby do acknowlege, declare and aſſert, That, in juſtifying faith, there is a real perſuaſion in the heart of a ſinner, that Chriſt is his; that he ſhall have life and ſalvation by him; and that

hat whatſoever Chriſt did for the redemption of mankind e did it for him; upon the foundation and ground of he gift or promiſe of Chriſt in the goſpel that is made to inners of Adam's family, as ſuch: and ſo there is in it a eſting upon him alone for the whole of this ſalvation.

And the Presbytery do hereby reject and condemn for he above reaſons, the following doctrines taught in the oreſaid acts of aſſembly; (1.) That ſaving and juſtifying aith is nor a perſuaſion in the heart, that Chriſt is ours; hat we ſhall have life and ſalvation by him; and that vhatever Chriſt did for the redemption of mankind, he id it for us: (2.) That all the perſuaſion in juſtifying aith, is only a belief and perſuaſion of the mercy of God n Chriſt, and of Chriſt's ability and willingneſs to ſave all hat come to him; this being ſuch a faith as Papiſts and Arminians can ſubſcribe unto, in a conſiſtency with their ther errors and hereſies: (3.) That one muſt firſt come o Chriſt and be a true believer, before he appropriate Chriſt and the whole of his ſalvation to himſelf, upon cripture ground and warrant; whereby the true nature f ſaving faith is ſubverted: all which tenets and opinions re contrary to the word of God, and the above paſſages f our Confeſſion and Catechiſms. Moreover,

III. Under the odious title of

Holineſs not neceſſary to ſalvation.

The Aſſembly 1720, cites the Marrow from page 150 to age 153 to prove the author's erroneous opinion, as they llege, *viz.* that *holineſs is not neceſſary to ſalvation.* But he author is in theſe paſſages ſhewing, that the believer altogether delivered from the law as a covenant of works; which appears from the author's own words, in nſwer to the queſtion of Neophytus, *How far forth am I elivered from the law, as it is the covenant of works?* Evangeliſta anſwers, 'As it is the covenant of works, you are wholly and altogether delivered and ſet free from it; you are dead to it, and it is dead to you.—You are now under another covenant, to wit, the covenant of grace, and you cannot be under two covenants at once, neither wholly nor partly; and therefore, as before you be-

'believed you were wholly under the covenant of works, 'as Adam left both you and all his poſterity after his fall; 'ſo now ſince you have believed, you are wholly under 'the covenant of grace,—You are now ſet free both from 'the commanding and condemning power of the covenant 'of works.—And therefore, though hereafter you do thro' 'frailty tranſgreſs any of all the ten commandments, yet 'do you not thereby tranſgreſs the covenant of works, 'there is no ſuch covenant now betwixt God and you.' Which doctrine of the believer's freedom from the law as a covenant of works, is ſo far from denying that holineſs is neceſſary to ſalvation, that it eſtabliſhes the neceſſity thereof in its own place, as ſhall be made evident in conſidering the paſſages which are quoted by the aſſembly 1720, upon this head in order to fix upon the author that erroneous opinion, that *holineſs is not neceſſary to ſalvation*, viz. page 153. 'If the law ſay, good works muſt 'be done, and the commandment muſt be kept, If thou 'wilt obtain ſalvation; then anſwer thou and ſay, I am 'already ſaved before thou cameſt; therefore I have no 'need of thy preſence,——Chriſt is my righteouſneſs my 'treaſure and my work. I confeſs O law, that I am nei-'ther godly or righteous, but yet this I am ſure of, that 'he is godly and righteous for me.' page 185. Good works 'may rather be called a believer's walking in the way of 'eternal happineſs, than the way itſelf.' The judgment of the aſſembly is as follows, 'This doctrine tends to ſlacken 'peoples diligence in the ſtudy of holineſs contrary to Heb. xii. 14. 2 Theſ. ii. 13. Eph. ii. 10. Iſa. xxxv. 8. James ii. 20. Conf. chap. 13. § 1. Large Cat. queſt. 32. Conf. chap. xv. § 2.

The general aſſembly 1622 alledge, that the above paſſage page 153 'will plainly bear (the author's) rejecting 'of the law, as it requires good works to be done (by a 'juſtified perſon) and the commandments to be kept, in 'order to obtain ſalvation; which, ſay they, is further 'ſtrengthned by the following words the omitting where-'of by the aſſembly is complained of in the repreſentati-'on, viz. "For in Chriſt I have all things at once neither "need I any thing more that is neceſſary unto ſalvation." Then perſonal holineſs and good works, and perſeve-

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'rance in holy obedience to the law of God, are not in 'the author's opinion) neceſſary unto ſalvation; and a 'man may have all things neceſſary unto ſalvation, tho' he 'be not yet a godly man: and therefore the aſſembly 'have given no juſt ground of quarrel; ſeeing tho' good 'works be excluded from being the ground of juſtifi-'cation, yet they are neceſſary in the juſtified, in order 'to their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal ſalvation. And to the ſame purpoſe, they ſpeak in vindication of the 8th act of the aſſembly 1720, enjoining miniſters to preach the doctrine 'of free juſtification thro' our bleſſed Surety, 'the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, received by faith alone; and of 'the neceſſity of an holy life, in order to the obtaining of 'everlaſting happineſs.' In which recommendation, as the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs unto us is omitted; ſo, as the ſaid act ſtands in connexion with the 5th condemning the believer's plea of Chriſt's active obedience, in anſwer to the law's demand of good works for obtaining ſalvation, it ſeems evidently to favour the erroneous doctrine, of ſomething wrought in, or done by the ſinner, as his righteouſneſs in keeping the new and goſpel law. Accordingly the aſſembly 1722 upon this head ſay; 'If they 'quarrel the phraſe, of obtaining everlaſting happineſs, they 'may alſo quarrel the apoſtles expreſſion,' 1 Cor. ix. 24. '25. and Phil. iii. 11 14 For it relates to the obtaining 'of enjoyment and poſſeſſion, and not of right and title 'to everlaſting happineſs, which all juſtified perſons have already attained.' And in the ſame act they aſſert, that it is of dangerous tendency to teach, 'that the law ac-'knowlegeth no works for obtaining ſalvation, but ſuch 'as found a title to it before the Lord: whereas (ſay 'they) the law requires good works in order to the ob-'taining ſalvation, tho' they do not found a title to it,'

The plain ſcope and tendency of all this, is to countenance and pave the way for the Arminian and Baxterian doctrine, of the goſpel, its being a new, proper preceptive law with ſanction, binding to faith, repentance, and other duties, which are conſequential to the entrance of ſin and the revelation of the grace of God in the goſpel; our perſonal obedience to which is neceſſary for our obtaining everlaſting happineſs; and though the aſſembly

own that the righteouſneſs of Chriſt founds our title; yet, according to them, we ourſelves are to work for the poſſeſſion; as will further appear from the expreſs words of the act of aſſembly 1722. 'The aſſembly conſidering, 'that there have at this time been publiſhed ſeveral poſi- 'tions and expreſſions, of a pernicious and dangerous ten- 'dency; ſuch as that in the goſpel, properly ſo taken, 'there are no precepts on the commands of faith and re 'pentance not expected; that holy obedience is not pro- 'perly a federal or conditional mean, or has any kind of 'cauſality, in order to the obtaining of glory.' Where it is obvious, that the aſſembly holds it as a truth, that, in the goſpel properly ſo taken, there are precepts, and that the commands of faith and repentance are among that number.

If the goſpel be taken largely, for a ſyſtem of all the doctrines promiſes, precepts, threatnings, and hiſtories, which any way concern man's recovery and ſalvation; then no doubt, all the precepts which belong to, or are deducible from the law of the ten commandments, are contained in it: many of which precepts, having a manifeſt connexion with the entrance of ſin, could not be promulgated before the goſpel was revealed, ſuch as, faith repentance, witneſſing for truth, and againſt the defections of the times, and the like: but then, all theſe precepts are reducible to the law of the ten commandments, though they had no due and proper objects, nor occaſion of being exerciſed in an innocent ſtate. And therefore, if the goſpel is taken ſtrictly and properly, as it is contradiſtinct from the law, it is a promiſe, containing glad tidings of a Saviour, with grace, mercy, and ſalvation in him, to loſt ſinners of Adam's family; according to Gen. iii. 15. 'I put enmity between thee and the woman, and be- 'tween thy ſeed and her ſeed; it ſhall bruiſe thy head, and 'thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel. Iſa. lii 1, 2, 3. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me 'to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath ſent me to 'bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the 'captives and the opening of the priſon to them that are 'bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and 'the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that 'mourn;

'mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to 'give unto them beauty for aſhes, the oil of joy for mour-'ning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs; 'that they might be called trees of righteouſneſs, the plant-'ing of the Lord, that he might be glorified.' Luke ii. 10, 11. 'Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which 'ſhall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in 'the city of David, a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord.' Rom. x. 5.—'How beautiful are the feet of them that 'preach the goſpel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good 'things,' Gal. iii. 8. 'The ſcripture foreſeeing that God 'would juſtify the heathen through faith preached before 'the goſpel unto Abraham, ſaying, In thee, ſhall all nati-'ons be bleſſed.' And thus when the goſpel is taken in its proper ſenſe, there are no precepts in the goſpel, and conſequently all precepts (theſe of faith and repentance not excepted) belong to the law; which according to the nature of it, being a perfect and compleat rule of all internal as well as external obedience, muſt faſten the new duty upon us the ſame moment that the goſpel reveals the new object. For it is evident, that, by the law of creation, or of the ten commandments, given to Adam in paradiſe in the form of a covenant of works, Adam was bound to believe whatever God ſhould reveal, and obey whatever he ſhould command; ſo that there never was nor can be an inſtance of duty, owing by the creature to the Creator, that is not commanded in the moral law either expreſly or by neceſſary conſequence. And therefore ſince the Lord was pleaſed to reveal his grace and good will in the goſpel, faith and repentance are required in the law, as well as other good works, according to the doctrines held forth from the ſcriptures in *Larger Catechiſm*, Queſt 104. where, among the duties required in the firſt commandment, we find, 'Believing him, truſting, hoping, delighting and rejoicing 'in him,—being careful in all things to pleaſe him, and 'ſorrowful when in any thing he is offended, and walking 'humbly with him.' And Queſt. 105. among the ſins forbidden there are, 'miſbelief, diſtruſt, incorrigibleneſs, 'and hardneſs of heart,' or impenitency, according to the ſcripture there quoted, Rom. ii. 5. 'But after thy hardneſs 'and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up to thyſelf wrath.'

Beſides, if the law does not bind ſinners to believe and repent, then faith and repentance, conſidered as works, would enter into the ground of our juſtification before God: for the ſcripture conſiders all works properly done by us, as works of the law, and, under that character, excludes them from the ground of our juſtification in the ſight of God: wherefore if faith and repentance are not works of the law, they are not excluded from, but muſt belong to the ground of our pardon and acceptance. And this doctrine is the foundation of the Neonomian error, which eſtabliſhes the neceſſity of another righteouſneſs, agreeable to the new goſpel law, in our own perſons, beſides the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as the immediate ground of our acceptance and confidence before God: and it evidently lands in the Pelagian univerſal grace: for if there be a new law, which was never given to Adam in innocency, Adam never loſt that grace whereby that new law is to be obeyed; and if ſo he who gave that law, according to them, behoved in juſtice to give new univerſal grace wherewith to obey it.

In conſequence of the above doctrine, of precepts in the goſpel properly ſo taken, the ſaid act of aſſembly maintains, that holy obedience is properly a federal or conditional mean, and has ſome kind of cauſality, in order to the obtaining of glory. It cannot but be matter of the deepeſt humiliation to all the true lovers of Zion, that ever ſuch doctrine ſhould be inculcate by the authority of the general aſſembly of the church of Scotland, whereby ſo wide a door is opened to Arminian and Socinian errors, which like a flood, have overflown this church and land.

This preſbytery do cordially acknowledge and maintain the neceſſity of holineſs and good works, in their proper place; that they are neceſſary as an acknowledgment of God's ſovereignty, and in obedience to his command, and as being the end of our election, redemption, and effectual calling; neceſſary as a part of that ſalvation, which is begun here, and perfected hereafter; neceſſary, as being expreſſions of our gratitude, and as being a ſpecial deſign of word and ordinances; that they are neceſſary, for making our calling and election ſure; and, as is contained in our Confeſſion of Faith, Chap. xvi. § 2.—'Good works

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'done in obedience to God's commandments, are the 'fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith: and by 'them believers manifeſt their thankfulneſs, ſtrengthen 'their aſſurance edify their brethren, adorn the profeſſi-'on of the goſpel, ſtop the mouths of the adverſaries, and 'glorify God.' But as the author of the Marrow nowhere denies, but elſewhere plainly aſſerts, the neceſſity of holineſs in the above or like reſpects (the fore-mentioned paſſages, condemned by the aſſembly, having a manifeſt relation to the believer's plea againſt the laws demands of perfect perſonal obedience: ſo from the whole tenor of the aſſembly's act it is obvious, that they want to bring in our own holineſs or good works, as having a caſual influence upon our eternal ſalvation, and as a federal and conditional mean thereof, which tends to overthrow the whole ſcripture doctrine of compleat righteouſneſs and ſalvation, only in and through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Nor will it vindicate the aſſembly, that they ſpeak of obtaining the enjoyment and poſſeſſion of everlaſting happineſs by a holy life, but not a right and title to it, which they allow that all juſtified perſons have already attained. For the clearing of which matter, it would be conſidered that,

1. The condemned paſſages of the Marrow on this head, ſpeak not of ſalvation compleated, or everlaſting happineſs in heaven, but of ſalvation commenced, or begun on earth; for in oppoſition to the law, as a covenant of works, demanding works to obtain ſalvation, the author brings in the believer anſwering, 'I am ſaved al-'ready by the works and obedience of another;' meaning ſalvation begun, according to Eph. ii. 8, 9. 'By grace are 'ye ſaved, not of works.' 2 Tim. i. 9. 'He hath ſaved us, '—not according to our works.' Tit. iii. 5. 'Not by 'works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but accord-'ing to his mercy he ſaved us:' and hence the Spirit of God (2 Tim. ii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 9. declares that believers, even in this life, receive the end of their faith, the ſalvation of their ſouls, and obtain the ſalvation which is in Chriſt Jeſus. All theſe, and many other places of ſcripture, ſpeak as the author does, of ſalvation obtained already in this life: for, as is declared, 1 John iii. 36.) 'he that be-

'lieveth

'lieveth on the Son hath everlasting life.' viz. in the beginnings and first fruits of it upon earth, as well as the title to it. Now surely we hold our right to, and possession of this begun salvation, not by our works or holy life, but by grace, as it reigns through the righteousness of Jesus Christ unto eternal life; yet this part of the Marrow speaking in such a strain, is condemned by the foresaid act of assembly: while the assembly's restricting the term salvation, unto the compleat enjoyment of salvation, is plainly for the sake of that dangerous principle, that though our faith and good works are not meritorious, or the cause of our justification, yet they are the cause of our eternal salvation, and a federal and conditional mean thereof. Thus,

2. Whereas the foresaid act of assembly declares, that the obtaining of everlasting happiness is to to be meant of the obtaining the enjoyment and possession thereof, and not of a right and title thereto; it will follow, in a consistency with this act, that it is sound doctrine to teach, that we obtain the right to heaven and eternal life by Christ's doing and obedience, but we obtain the possession of it by our own doing of personal holiness: but the scripture asserts, 1 Thes. v. 9. that we 'obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.' Eph. i. 11. 'In whom also we have 'obtained an inheritance.' Heb. ix. 2. He hath obtained eternal redemption for us. And whereas that scripture, 1 Cor. ix. 24. quoted by the assembly seems to make the incorruptible crown to be obtained by our running; it is to be remarked, that the meaning can never be of the believer's obtaining not by faith, but by works; for that word in the original signifies to receive or apprehend, and so it is rendered in the words immediately preceding, *viz. one receiveth the prize*, and thus, *So run that ye may obtain*, is, so run that ye may receive the crown, which indeed agrees with the scripture notion of heaven. As it is a gift freely bestowed upon the ground of Christ's righteousness, Rom. vi. 23. 'The gift of God is eternal life, 'thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.' Luke xii. 32. 'It is your 'Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' And as eternal life is freely given of God; so it is dearly purchased by Christ; and not only the right and title to it, but

but alſo the poſſeſſion of it is purchaſed, and therefore called the purchaſed poſſeſſion, Eph. i 14. of which we have the earneſt in this life, that is, not only a pledge, but part in hand.

Now, ſince both part and whole, the begun and compleat poſſeſſion are purchaſed and obtained by the blood of Chriſt; who that underſtands the goſpel will venture to ſay of any of them, that they are obtained by our works or holy life, as properly a federal and conditional mean: though without holineſs none ſhall ſee God, nor can any be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light, who are not made meet for it by ſanctification and holineſs of heart, and, in adult perſons of life alſo, (this being a great part of that ſalvation whereof they are here poſſeſſed, being alſo neceſſarily connected with and preparative unto the full poſſeſſion of eternal life hereafter:) yet to ſpeak in the terms of the foreſaid act, teaching that we are to obtain the poſſeſſion of eternal life in heaven by our works and holy life, and at the ſame time condemning the expreſſion of being ſaved already by the works and obedience of Chriſt, is ſo far from having the appearance of orthodoxy. And, at beſt, what ſtrange divinity would it be in heaven, to ſay, Though we cannot boaſt that we have obtained a right to heaven, yet we have obtained the poſſeſſion of it by our holy life; our title to this ſalvation we now enjoy, was obtained by Chriſt's obedience, but our poſſeſſion of it was obtained by our own obedience. This language would ſound ill in heaven, and conſequently it ſhould ſound ill on earth; for it is not the joyful ſound of the goſpel, but the unpleaſant ſound of life, as it were by the works of the law: whereas we find in ſcripture, that the language of the redeemed is, and will be through eternity, *ſalvation to our God, which ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.* Rev. vii. 10. chap. v. 9.—*Thou waſt ſlain, and has redeemed us unto God by thy blood,* &c.

As to the above paſſages of the Marrow condemned by the aſſembly, *viz.* 'I am already ſaved, before thou cameſt, therefore I have no need of thy preſence; for in Chriſt I have all things at once, neither need I any thing more that is neceſſary to ſalvation; Chriſt is my righteouſ-

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'neſs, my treaſure, and my work. I confeſs, O law, 'that I am neither godly nor righteous, but yet this I am 'ſure of, that he is godly and righteous for me?' Theſe being the words of the great reformer Martin Luther, wherein he expreſſes the perfection and extent of Chriſt's acting obedience in our room, anſwering both the godlineſs and the righteouſneſs required in the law, and anſwering the law charge againſt the believer, as being neither godly nor righteous in himſelf, and in the eye of the law; were never before quarrelled or condemned by any Proteſtant church. Indeed, as the believer has no plea, in anſwer to the law's demand of ſatisfaction to juſtice for ſin, but the ſuffering of Jeſus Chriſt our ſurety; ſo he has no plea, in anſwer to the laws demand of perfect obedience, for intitling him to eternal life and ſalvation, but that which here ſtands condemned by the aſſembly. For the law demands of every perſons a nature perfectly innocent and holy, while demanding a life perfectly righteous; and, ſince we have neither the one nor the other in ourſelves, we muſt have them both in Chriſt, elſe we muſt remain under the condemnation of the law; wherefore, as there is a perſonal holineſs of nature, and righteouſneſs of life, begun in every true believer, which ſhall be carried on and perfected in the work of ſanctification; ſo there is in Chriſt a perfect, compleat holineſs of nature and righteouſneſs of life which is imputed to the ſinner, in the moment of believing, for his juſtification in the ſight of God; and conſequently (CHRIST IS GODLY AND RIGHTEOUS FOR ME) is the only anſwer that the believer can give to the law's demand of good works to be done, and keeping the commandments for obtaining ſalvation; according to 'Rom. vi. 5. To him that worketh not, but be-'lieveth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is 'counted for righteouſneſs.' 1 Cor. i. 30. 'But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption, and Conf. chap. xi. § 1. 'Theſe whom God effec-'tually calleth, he alſo freely juſtifieth:——Not for any 'thing wrought in them, or done by them:—but by im-'puting the obedience and ſatisfaction of Chriſt unto 'them.' So that if we have recourſe in the leaſt to our per-

perſonal holineſs, as the ground, in whole or in part, of our enjoyment of grace here, or glory hereafter, we diſhonour both the law and law-giver, and rival it with the Son of God, by ſeeking to divide the glory of our ſalvation with him. And now whereas the act of aſſembly above-conſidered teaches the neceſſity of perſonal holineſs and obedience, as a federal and conditional mean, and as having ſome kind of cauſality in order to the obtaining of glory, it effectually cuts of the believer's plea, of the perfect righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and holineſs of his nature, imputed to the believer, in anſwer to the law's demand of a holy nature and perfect righteouſneſs of life, for juſtification and title to eternal life. And as this is contrary to our own Confeſſion of Faith, ſo likewiſe to the doctrine of other reformed churches, particularly, Palatine catechiſm. *Queſt.* 'How art thou righteous before God? *Anſw* —The per-'fect ſatisfaction, righteouſneſs, and holineſs of Chriſt, is 'imputed and given unto me, as if I had neither commit-'ted any ſin, neither were any blot or corruption cleav-'ing unto me: not only the perfect righteouſneſs, but e-'ven the holineſs of Chriſt alſo is imputed and given unto 'me:——The ſatisfaction, righteouſneſs, and holineſs of 'Chriſt alone, is my righteouſneſs in the ſight of God.'

Wherefore, the presbytery do hereby declare and aſſert (1.) That the goſpel, properly and ſtrictly taken, as contradiſtinct from the law, is a promiſe containing glad tidings of a Saviour, with grace, mercy, and ſalvation in him to loſt ſinners of Adam's family: and conſequently, all precepts (theſe of faith and repentance not excepted) do in a ſtrict and proper ſenſe belong to the law. (2.) That as the ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt our Surety, is the believer's only plea, in anſwer to the law's demand of ſatisfaction to juſtice; ſo the compleat and perfect conformity of the Surety to the law in nature and life, is the believer's only plea, in anſwer to the law's demands of perfect obedience.

And the presbytery did and hereby do, upon the above grounds condemn the following tenets and opinions. (1.) That the goſpel ſtrictly taken, in a new, proper and preceptive law with ſanction, binding to faith, repentance,

and the other duties which are conſequential to the reve-lation of the grace of God. (2.) Though the righteouſ-neſs of Chriſt only founds our title to eternal glory; yet it is our perſonal holineſs, or our own obedience to the new law, upon which we obtain the poſſeſſion thereof. (3.) That our perſonal holineſs, or good works have a cauſal influence upon our eternal ſalvation, and are a fede-ral and conditional mean thereof; in which, ſenſe the aſ-ſembly's directing miniſters to preach the neceſſity of an holy life, in order to the obtaining of everlaſting happineſs is of very dangerous conſequence to the doctrine of free grace. All which poſitions are contrary to the ſcriptures and paſſages of our Confeſſions of Faith and Larger Cate-chiſm above cited.

As to

IV. *Fear of Puniſhment and hope of Reward, not al-lowed to be Motives of a Believer's Obedience.*

Under this head, the following paſſage is cited by the aſſembly for the proof of this their charge againſt the au-thor of the Marrow, viz. Page 181. 'Would you not have 'believers to eſchew evil, and do good for fear of hell, or 'hope of heaven; *Anſw. No indeed*,—for ſo far forth as 'they do ſo, their obedience is but ſlaviſh.' And the aſ-ſembly add, that, 'a great deal more to this purpoſe is to 'be ſeen, Pages 175, 179, 180, 182, 183, 184. and ap-'pears contrary to Pſal. xlv. 11. Pſal. cxix. 4, 6. Exod. 'xx. 2. James i. 25. and ii. 8, 10, 11, 12. 1 Tim. iv. 8. 'Col. iii. 24. Heb. xi. 7, 26. Rev. ii. 10. 2 Cor. v. 9, '10, 11. Heb. xii. 2, 28, 29. 2 Pet. iii 24 *Confeſ. 'Chap.* xvi. § 2, and 6.' Moreover the aſſembly, *Anno* 1722, ſay (in anſwer to the repreſentation, given in the former year by twelve brethren) 'This part of the aſſem-'bly's act (viz 1720) is unfairly repreſented, ſeeing they 'do not draw that inference (viz. fear of puniſhment and 'hope of reward, not allowed to be motives of a believ-'er's obedience) from that paſſage alone, but cite other 'paſſages, as page 175, and 179, where fear of puniſhment 'and hope of reward, in expreſs terms, and in general 'without exception, are removed from being motives un-

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'to the believer's obedience. To which (they ſay) may 'be added, Page 73. where he ſays of believers under the 'Old Teſtament, that anſwerably as they believed, an-'ſwerably they yielded obedience to the law, without fear 'of puniſhment, or hope of reward. And page 216. cited 'in the following paragraph of the act, where he exhorts 'the believer, to yield free obedience, without having re-'ſpect either to what the law of works either promiſed or 'threatned; but alſo without having reſpect to what the 'law of Chriſt either promiſeth or threatneth.' And the aſſembly further complain of the brethren, 'That when 'they ſay, they heartily approve of the author's poſition 'in this ſenſe, viz. That believers are not to do good, for 'hope of obtaining heaven by their own works and doings '(which, ſay the aſſembly, is a calumnious inſinuation a-'gainſt the orthodox doctrine) they do not declare them-'ſelves, whether they allow, that a believer may and 'ought to be moved unto obedience by the hope of hea-'ven, in any other ſenſe, than that of a hope of obtaining 'a right and title to it by his own works: or, if no re-'gard can be had to the promiſed reward of the heavenly 'inheritance by a believer in his obedience, without its be-'ing mercenary.' But here it may be obſerved, that the aſſembly do not treat the brethren fairly, while they take no notice of what is ſaid in the anſwer given into the com-miſſion of the former aſſembly, unto the queſtion put to them on this head; wherein they ſhew their agreement in principle with the ſcripture and Confeſſion of Faith, and with renowned orthodox divines, as to the motives of the believer's obedience: whereas the aſſembly do inſinuate, in the challenge here given, as if there were ground to ſuſ-pect the brethren of maintaining, 'That no regard can be 'had to the promiſed reward of the heavenly inheritance, 'by a believer in his obedience, without its being merce-'nary;' while yet the brethren have in their anſwer to the 12th query, among other things, declared 'That 'taking heaven for a ſtate of endleſs felicity, in the enjoy-'ment of God in Chriſt, we are ſo far from thinking that 'this is to be excluded from being a motive of the believ-'er's obedience, that we think it the chief end of man next 'to the glory of God——and this indeed the believer

'is to have in his eye as the recompence of reward, an 'a notable motive of obedience.'

What the doctrine delivered by the author of the Marrow, upon this head, amounts to, may be clearly seen from the pages quoted by the assembly, and is plainly this; That legal mercenary hopes, ought not to influence the believer's obedience, on the one hand; nor servile, slavish, legal fears, on the other: or that, on the one hand, the believer is not to seek to be influenced to obedience, by the fear of his falling under the eternal loss of the favour of God, and under his eternal displeasure in hell fire, contrary to that unalterable state of favour into which the believer is brought; neither is he to fear that even temporal punishment shall be inflicted upon him in a way of vindictive wrath: both which are unsuitable to that full assurance of faith of the Lord's unchangeable love, and of a saving inviolable relation to him, which the believer is always called to maintain and hold fast with stedfastness: and on the other hand, That believers are not to be influenced to obedience by the hope of reward, or hope of heaven as the reward any way due to their obedience that is either purchased or procured, or to be obtained by any works of righteousness done by them, and so a reward of debt, as if their works were either meritorious in themselves or meritorious by paction, which is inconsistent with the whole method of grace revealed in the gospel, and particularly to the lively faith believers are called to maintain of their obtaining heaven and glory, even the full possession of eternal life, by grace or free gift, and not by works.

As to what the law of Christ promiseth or threatens, it is plain, the scope of the author of the Marrow is, That though the believer is called to expect to share of the discipline of his Father's family in the case of transgression, and to entertain a deep sense of the awfulness of his Father's frowns and rods; yet is he called more and more to grow in the genuine spirit and disposition of the children of God, so as to have the love of his Father more and more the motive of his obedience, rather than the fear of the rod; even as a child though called to fear his father's displeasure, yet is called to study more and more to be impressed

preſſed with a ſenſe of his father's love; ſo as he may be excited and influenced in his obedience by the love of his father and not the fear of the whip.

That this is the declared meaning of the author, is plain from theſe paſſages quoted, and other places in the book: particularly, after it is ſaid, page 174. 'We do not there-'fore deſtroy or condemn the law, becauſe we ſay it doth 'not juſtify;' Then page 175 Neophytus is brought in ſpeaking. 'I do now in ſome ſmall meaſure believe, that I 'am by Chriſt freely and fully juſtified and acquitted from 'all my ſins, and therefore have no need either to eſchew 'evil or to do good for fear of puniſhment or hope of 'reward.' Again, the like expreſſion, which the aſſembly points to page 179, ſtands thus in connexion: page 178, at the cloſe, Before a man do truly believe in Chriſt 'he may ſo reform his life, *&c.*——Yet being under the 'covenant of works all the obedience that he yields to 'the law——is (page 179) of——the bond woman,—— 'works of a bond ſervant, that is moved and conſtrained 'to do all that he doth for fear of puniſhment and hope of 'reward.———He pretends the ſerving of God, whereas 'indeed he intends the ſerving of himſelf,——is an empty 'vine, and therefore muſt needs bring forth fruit to him-'ſelf.—When a man, through the hearing of faith, has 'received the Spirit of Chriſt, Gal. iii. 2. that Spirit, (page '180) according to the meaſure of faith, writes the lively 'law of love in his heart, whereby he is enabled to work 'freely,——without the coaction or compulſion of the 'law;——the love of Chriſt—carries him on,——freely 'and chearfully,——to keep the law, without fear of hell 'or hope of heaven.'

Theſe and the like paſſages plainly ſhew, that the author's ſcope is to guard againſt a mercenary ſervile ſpirit in our obedience, acting or bringing forth fruit to ourſelves. And to ſtretch the author's words, further, as if they imported a direction or exhortation to diſregard the awfulneſs of the divine threatnings and judgments againſt ſin, exciting to ſtand in awe of committing it; and the excellency of the recompence of reward, ſo as not to be hereby animated in the obedience of love; is contrary to the plain intent of the author's reaſoning; as particularly

larly may be obſerved in his doctrine concerning the believer's reward, that it is in God himſelf, even in the enjoyment of him who is the reward and inheritance; and that this reward is not the reward of ſervice done by the believer, and ſo not the reward of ſervants, but the inheritance of ſons, ſecured to the believer, previous and without all reſpect had to his obedience as the price in whole or in part, or any federal condition of the poſſeſſion of it; ſo that he ought to have this reward continually in his eye, to animate him in running forward to the full poſſeſſion, not to obtain it as the hire or reward of his running, but to haſten to it becauſe it is freely made over unto him. And this conſequently, as the believer ought to have in his eye the depth of that miſery he has by grace eſcaped; and to regard and deeply conſider the threatnings of that eternal wrath and miſery, as they diſcover what even his ſins in themſelves deſerve: that he may be thereby excited to adore the love of his Redeemer, in delivering him from ſo great a death, and to thankful obedience to him for the ſame according to 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. So the believer is alſo bound to lay to heart the threatnings of fatherly chaſtiſements, as they are evidences of his heavenly father's deteſtation of ſin, exciting him to abhor it the more; and likewiſe, as evidences of his father's love in correcting him for his profit, and declaring he will do ſo, that he may be a partaker of his holineſs. Such views as theſe, the believer is called to take of what is promiſed and threatned: nevertheleſs, it is quite another matter, and contrary to the genuine exerciſe of the Chriſtian, as ſuch, to be influenced by the promiſe and threatning; as if his obedience were the procuring cauſe, or proper federal ground or condition of his freedom from the puniſhment, and enjoyment of the bleſſing; ſeeing all boaſting is excluded by the goſpel, ſo that the believer's ſole and only plea is the free, ſovereign mercy of God in Chriſt. Thus the ground of expectation before God, or of confidence in his ſight (which is what the author of the Marrow has evidently in view) is ſurely not our obedience, either to the law of works or the law of Chriſt: and therefore, the motive to obedience ought not to be any ſervile reſpect (which is evidently what the author

points to either to what the law of works or the law of Chriſt, either promiſeth or threatneth.

But, as the aſſembly condemn the expreſſions uſed in the Marrow, wirhout any diſtinction; ſo, by what they ſay in their act, they give too evident ground to think, it is in the above declared view and ſenſe of the words that they condemn them as erroneous: and that it is the ſcope and deſign of their act, to aſſert a believer's duty of yielding obedience, from a principle and upon the motives of legal, ſervile fears and hopes.

That this is the mind of the aſſembly, is evident; conſidering, that under this ſame head, page 22, 23, 24. of their act 1722, they allow no other legal ſervile hope of heaven, but the hope of obtaining a right and title to it, by our own works; inſinuating that no other regard to the reward in our obedience, can be reckoned mercenary; and they aſſert, that the hope of obtaining the poſſeſſion and enjoyment of heaven, by our obedience, is not mercenary.

This, then, being the end, the aſſembly do aſſign unto the obedience of believers, *viz.* That it is in order to their obtaining eternal life: their after doctrine in this act, 1722, page 26 ſhews, That hereby they underſtand, that the holy obedience of believers is properly a federal and conditional mean and cauſe of their enjoying that eternal life: and thus, they divide the glory of our enjoying ſalvation between Chriſt and the creature, as to the ground of the hope thereof; while they plainly ſay, that believers are to be influenced in obedience by thoſe hopes of heaven, which are, at leaſt in part, to be founded upon their own obedience, as the proper federal condition thereof: whereby the whole goſpel is perverted, and another foundation laid than that which God has laid in Zion: and this doctrine is particularly contrary to theſe ſcriptures, Tit. iii. 4, 5, 6, 7. *But after that the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt; which he ſhed on us abundantly, thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour: that being juſtified by his grace, we ſhould be made heirs, according*

to the hope of eternal life, Rom. iv. 4, 5, 16. 'Now to 'him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, 'but of debt: but to him that worketh not, but believeth 'on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for 'righteouſneſs. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be 'by grace; to the end the promiſe might be ſure to all the 'ſeed.' And chap. vi. 23. 'The wages of ſin is death: 'but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jeſus Chriſt 'our Lord. chap. v. 21. 'That as ſin hath reigned unto 'death, even ſo might grace reign thro' righteouſneſs unto 'eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.' chap. xi. 6. 'And 'if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherways grace 'is no more grace: but if it be of works, then is it no 'more grace; otherwiſe work is no more work.' Gal. iii. '3, 11, 12, 13, 14. Are ye ſo fooliſh? Having begun in the 'Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the fleſh? but that no 'man is juſtified by the law in the ſight of God, it is evi-'dent: for, the juſt ſhall live by faith. And the law is 'not of faith; but, the man that doth them ſhall live in 'them. Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, 'being made a curſe for us; for it is written, curſed is e-'very one that hangeth on a tree; that the bleſſing of Abra-'ham might come on the Gentiles thro' Jeſus Chriſt; that 'we might receive the promiſe of the Spirit through faith.' chap. v. 4, 5. 'Chriſt is become of no effect unto you, who-'ſoever of you are juſtified by the law; ye are fallen from 'grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of 'righteouſneſs by faith.' 2 Tim. i. 9. 'Who hath ſaved us 'and called us, with an holy calling; not according to our 'works, but according to his own purpoſe and grace, which 'was given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began.' Eph. ii. 9, 10. 'Not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt; for 'we are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good 'works, which God hath before ordained that we ſhould walk 'in them' Luke xvii. 10. 'So likeways ye, when ye ſhall 'have done all theſe things which are commanded you, ſay 'we are unprofitable ſervants; we have done that which 'was our duty to do.' Luke i. 74, 75. That he would grant 'unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our 'enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and 'righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our life:' And

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to our Confeſſion of Faith, Chap. xii. 'All thoſe that are 'juſtified, God vouchſafeth,——to make partakers of the 'grace of adoption: by which they——inherit the pro-'miſes, as heirs of everlaſting ſalvation. Chap. xiv. § 2. '——the principal acts of ſaving faith are accepting, re-'ceiving, and reſting upon Chriſt alone for——*eternal 'life, by virtue of the covenant of grace:*' comparing the ſcripture proof there adduced, Acts xv. 11. 'But we 'believe that through the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt we 'ſhall be SAVED, even as they.' Confeſſ. Chap. xx. § 1. 'the liberty which Chriſt hath purchaſed for believers, 'conſiſts in their yielding obedience unto him, not out 'of ſlaviſh fear, but a child-like love and willing mind.' From theſe and the like ſcriptures and paſſages of the Confeſſion, it evidently appears, that true, ſpiritual obedience flows from, and is influenced by faith's view of the love of Chriſt caſting out that fear of wrath and puniſhment which neceſſarily hath torment in it; 1 John iv. 18. 'There is no fear in love; but perfect love caſteth 'out fear: becauſe fear hath torment.' ver. 19. 'We love 'him, becauſe he firſt loved us.' Pſal. xxvi. 3. 'Thy lov-'ing kindneſs is before mine eyes: And I have walked in 'thy truth:' and that on the other hand, it is not influenced by any ſervile legal hope of reward, or any view of a legal or federal connexion between the obedience and the enjoyment or poſſeſſion of the inheritance, which is by promiſe alone. Neither is there the leaſt countenance given to the oppoſite doctrines, by theſe ſcriptures, where the everlaſting inheritance is expreſſed under the notion, or by the title of reward; ſeeing this reward (being infinite) can only be purchaſed by an infinite price, even that price given by Emmanuel: and this reward is declared, to be given to us, not of debt but of grace; not to him that worketh, but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly: and to be the gift of God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Thus, the believer in this reſpect to this recompence of reward is called to act, not for life, as the reward of his ſervice, but from the faith of his certain enjoyment of that life as the reward of the ſervice of the new covenant head; and the

more he thus views it, the more ſhould and will he be animated to chearful obedience.

Wherefore the presbytery, for the neceſſary vindication of truth, manifeſtly injured by the ſaid acts of aſſembly, did, and hereby do aſſert, maintain and declare,

1. That it is a precious goſpel truth, that believers, being heirs of the heavenly inheritance, and having it not by the law, but by free promiſe, through Jeſus Chriſt: ought not to be influenced in their obedience, by the hopes of obtaining the poſſeſſion and enjoyment of the inheritance, by any works of righteouſneſs or obedience done by them.

2. That as they ſhould be moved to obedience from the conſideration of the excellency of the heavenly inheritance, even God in Chriſt as their inheritance and exceeding great reward, and by many other motives; ſo particularly, they are to be influenced by this motive, that they have got the begun poſſeſſion of this inheritance, and have the full poſſeſſion thereof ſecured, by rich grace and free promiſe, thro' Jeſus Chriſt; being made *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt.*

3. That, tho' the believer ought to entertain an holy awe and dread of the majeſty of God, and of the awfulneſs of his threatning and judgments, both temporal and eternal, againſt ſin and ſinners: and to conſider from them what even his ſins in themſelves deſerve: yet, he is not called to be moved or excited to obedience to the precepts of the law (either as it is a covenant of works, or as it is a rule of life) by the fear of his falling into hell, for omitting duty or committing ſin; but he is called fully to believe his infallible ſecurity from going down into that pit, through the ranſom which God has found out; ſo as, through the firm and lively faith of this his ſafety in a ſtate of favour with God, to have his heart more and more filled with that love which caſteth out tormenting fear, and will be natively exerciſed in a chearful goſpel obedience to all the Lord's commandments.

4. That though believers ſhould remember and ſeriouſly conſider, that there is diſcipline in their father's family; and believe that they may expect it, when they tranſgreſs his law, and keep not his commandments; yet, as this

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diſcipline is inſtituted on account of remaining corruption in them; ſo, the conſideration thereof ought to excite them more and more to improve the blood of Jeſus Chriſt by faith for draining and mortifying this corruption; and particularly, ſubduing and removing the legal byas and diſpoſition, which is the ſtrength of ſin in them; that thus, they may be more and more made to ſerve in newneſs of ſpirit, and not in the oldneſs of the letter.

And the preſbytery do, in like manner, condemn the following poſitions, as dangerous, unſound, and erroneous.

1. That there is a legal connexion inſtituted between the obedience of believers, and their enjoying rewards, with eſcaping puniſhments, temporal or eternal; or that the Lord deals with them in this manner upon law terms; and that their hopes of enjoying the one and eſcaping the other, as to riſe and fall according to the meaſure of their obedience.

2. That a perſons being moved to obedience by the hope of heaven cannot be ſaid to be mercenary, in any other ſenſe than that of a hope of obtaining a right and title to it, by his own works: and that a believer ought to be moved to obedience, or to eſchew evil and do good by the hopes of his enjoying heaven, or any good temporal or eternal, by his own obedience as the federal conditional mean and cauſe thereof.

All which poſitions are contrary to the above cited, and many other ſcriptures and paſſages in our ſtandards.

Further,

V. Under this head.

That the Believer is not under the Law as a Rule of Life.

The aſſembly 1720, attempting to prove againſt the author of the Marrow his maintaining the foreſaid error, viz. 'That the believer is not under the law as a rule of 'life, relate ſome paſſages out of his book, and then cite a number of pages. The paſſages related are three; the laſt whereof, together with the pages only cited not being again repeated in the act 1722, we ſhall conſider them in the firſt place. The third paſſage then in act 1720, is ta-

ken from page 216 of the book, viz. 'You will yield o-'bedience to the law of Chriſt, not only without having 'reſpect to what the law of works either promiſeth or 'threatneth: but alſo without having reſpect to what the 'law of Chriſt either promiſeth or threatneth: and this 'is to ſerve the Lord without fear of any penalty which 'either the law of works or the law of Chriſt threatens,' Luke i. 74. This being the paſſage that affords the aſſembly the moſt plauſible pretence for charging the author with maintaining, *That the believer is not under the law as a rule of life*, it is eaſy to ſee how ſtrained they were to prove their point, and how impracticable it was for them to do ſo, without doing injury to truth. For this paſſage relates not properly to obedience, but to the motives of the believer's obedience; and ſo it belongs to, and is noticed upon another head. But as here it is adduced to prove, that the author denies the believer to be under the law as a rule of life, it ſeems to be very far from anſwering that end. For, in the paſſage itſelf, the author is owning, that the believer ſhould yield obedience to the law: and tho' it could be proven, that he is unduly cutting off all regard to the promiſe or threatning; yet while he is not rejecting the command, but maintaining the regard the believer ought to have thereunto, and owning the obligation he is under to yield obedience; the ſaid paſſage will never prove his maintaining, that the believer is not under the law as a rule of life, but the quite contrary: ſince here his ſcope is not to ſpeak of the law, but the ſanction, and to ſhew what a pure regard the believer ought to have to the command, though promiſes and threatnings both were cut off, and conſequently to the law itſelf, as a *rule of life*. But the wrong done to the author by attempting (tho' in vain) to prove the foreſaid error againſt him, were the leſs to be noticed, if, at the ſame time, the moſt precious goſpel truths were not wronged and wounded, as appeareth in what follow.

The aſſembly 1720, on the ſame head, cites pages 5. 1, 3, 180, 156, 157, 163, 199, 209, 210. of the Marrow as alſo proving againſt the author, his denying the law to be a rule of life to the believer, and both there, and in the cloſe of the act they condemn theſe paſſages, as contra-

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ry to the holy ſcriptures, and our Confeſſion of Faith, but, as it would be tedious, and is needleſs, to repeat here the paſſages contained in theſe pages; ſo any that pleaſe to conſult them, may not only ſee how egregiouſly the author is wronged in that act, but alſo may be filled with aſtoniſhment to behold, how far the general aſſembly of the church of Scotland has been left of God, to condemn ſo many precious truths, manifeſtly founded on the word of God, and moſt agreeable to our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms.

But farther, the aſſembly 1720, pretending to prove againſt the author of the Marrow, his maintaing the foreſaid error, *viz.* 'That the believer is not under the law as 'a rule of life;' are ſo far from doing it, that, for proof they cite and condemn theſe words, page 250. 'As the law 'is the covenant of works, you are wholly and altogether 'ſet free from it;' and, page 151. 'You are now ſet free 'both from the commanding and condemning power of the 'covenant of works.' Theſe words ſay the aſſembly 1722, 'are condeſcended upon as a part of the proof againſt the 'author of his maintaining this erroneous tenet, 'That 'the believer is not under the law as a rule of life;' and then they declare, 'that it was not the meaning nor in-'tention of the ſaid act, in the leaſt to inſinuate, that be-'lievers in Chriſt are under the law as a covenant of works 'or that they are obliged to ſeek juſtification by their own 'obedience.—And the aſſembly appoints, that theſe two 'foreſaid paſſages ſhall not be underſtood as a proof of the 'aforeſaid error, in any other ſenſe than as, the aſſembly 'did apprehend, that the author underſtood by the cove-'nant of works, the moral law ſtrictly and properly taken, 'as it appears he does, ſay they, in other places of the 'book; as particularly, page 7. he ſays, That indeed the 'law of works ſignifies the moral law; and the moral 'ſtrictly and properly taken ſignifies the covenant of 'works.' Now, the injury which by all this is done to truth, appears in the following particulars.

(1.) They find fault with the Marrow for aſſerting that the moral law is ſtrictly and properly the covenant of works and that, as ſuch, the believer is wholly and altogether ſet free from it; as if his ſpeaking in this manner did afford

ken from page 216 of the book, viz. 'You will yield o-'bedience to the law of Christ, not only without having 'respect to what the law of works either promiseth or 'threatneth: but also without having respect to what the 'law of Christ either promiseth or threatneth: and this 'is to serve the Lord without fear of any penalty which 'either the law of works or the law of Christ threatens,' Luke i. 74. This being the passage that affords the assembly the most plausible pretence for charging the author with maintaining, *That the believer is not under the law as a rule of life*, it is easy to see how strained they were to prove their point, and how impracticable it was for them to do so, without doing injury to truth. For this passage relates not properly to obedience, but to the motives of the believer's obedience; and so it belongs to, and is noticed upon another head. But as here it is adduced to prove, that the author denies the believer to be under the law as a rule of life, it seems to be very far from answering that end. For, in the passage itself, the author is owning, that the believer should yield obedience to the law: and tho' it could be proven, that he is unduly cutting off all regard to the promise or threatning; yet while he is not rejecting the command, but maintaining the regard the believer ought to have thereunto, and owning the obligation he is under to yield obedience; the said passage will never prove his maintaining, that the believer is not under the law as a rule of life, but the quite contrary: since here his scope is not to speak of the law, but the sanction, and to shew what a pure regard the believer ought to have to the command, though promises and threatnings both were cut off, and consequently to the law itself, as a *rule of life*. But the wrong done to the author by attempting (tho' in vain) to prove the foresaid error against him, were the less to be noticed, if, at the same time, the most precious gospel truths were not wronged and wounded, as appeareth in what follow.

The assembly 1720, on the same head, cites pages 5. 1, 3, 180, 156, 157, 163, 199, 209, 210. of the Marrow as also proving against the author, his denying the law to be a rule of life to the believer, and both there, and in the close of the act they condemn these passages, as contra-

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ry to the holy ſcriptures, and our Confeſſion of Faith, but, as it would be tedious, and is needleſs, to repeat here the paſſages contained in theſe pages; ſo any that pleaſe to conſult them, may not only ſee how egregiouſly the author is wronged in that act, but alſo may be filled with aſtoniſhment to behold, how far the general aſſembly of the church of Scotland has been left of God, to condemn ſo many precious truths, manifeſtly founded on the word of God, and moſt agreeable to our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms.

But farther, the aſſembly 1720, pretending to prove againſt the author of the Marrow, his maintaing the foreſaid error, *viz.* 'That the believer is not under the law as 'a rule of life;' are ſo far from doing it, that, for proof they cite and condemn theſe words, page 250. 'As the law 'is the covenant of works, you are wholly and altogether 'ſet free from it;' and, page 151. 'You are now ſet free 'both from the commanding and condemning power of the 'covenant of works.' Theſe words ſay the aſſembly 1722, 'are condeſcended upon as a part of the proof againſt the 'author of his maintaining this erroneous tenet, 'That 'the believer is not under the law as a rule of life;' and then they declare, 'that it was not the meaning nor in-'tention of the ſaid act, in the leaſt to inſinuate, that be-'lievers in Chriſt are under the law as a covenant of works 'or that they are obliged to ſeek juſtification by their own 'obedience.—And the aſſembly appoints, that theſe two 'foreſaid paſſages ſhall not be underſtood as a proof of the 'aforeſaid error, in any other ſenſe than as, the aſſembly 'did apprehend, that the author underſtood by the cove-'nant of works, the moral law ſtrictly and properly taken, 'as it appears he does, ſay they, in other places of the 'book; as particularly, page 7. he ſays, That indeed the 'law of works ſignifies the moral law; and the moral 'ſtrictly and properly taken ſignifies the covenant of 'works.' Now, the injury which by all this is done to truth, appears in the following particulars.

(1.) They find fault with the Marrow for aſſerting that the moral law is ſtrictly and properly the covenant of works and that, as ſuch, the believer is wholly and altogether ſet free from it; as if his ſpeaking in this manner did afford

afford any proof of his maintaining that the believer is not under the law as a rule of life: whereas, in our Larger Catechiſm, queſt. 93. What is the moral law? The anſwer given, is a ſtrict and proper definition of the covenant of works, from which the ſaid Catechiſm, in anſwer to queſtion 97 aſſerts, that believers are delivered, 'ſo as 'thereby they are neither juſtified nor condemned.' which is the ſame in other words, with their being neither under the command of it to be juſtified, nor under the threatning of it to be condemned thereby. Hence, the aſſembly by that act, inſtead of fixing the foreſaid error upon the author of the Marrow, have but further condemned the truth as expreſſed both in that book and in our catechiſm; pretending, that the goſpel doctrine, delivered in that ſtrain, tends ſomeway or other to looſeneſs, or to looſe the believer from his obligation to the law as a rule of life.

(2.) As they charge an erroneous ſenſe upon the Marrow, without being able to prove it; ſo their own wrong ſenſe and erroneous opinion upon this matter, is too evident in that act; as therein they make thoſe two propoſitions to be one and the ſame, *viz.* 'That believers in Chriſt 'are not under the law as a covenant of works,' and, 'That they are not obliged to ſeek juſtification by their 'own obedience.' Theſe two propoſitions they make alternatives, and of the ſame import, but if they be the ſame, then the believer is no otherwiſe freed from the covenant of works after he is a believer, than he was before when in unbelief; for, then, he was as little obliged to ſeek juſtification by his own obedience, as he is now: and conſequently he was as much delivered from the law as a covenent of works, before he believed as ſince. Yea according to this erroneous poſition, the believer is no more delivered from the law as a covenant of works, than the unbeliever who is as little obliged to ſeek juſtification by his own obedience as the believer is. Here then is a groſs perverting of the truth relating to the command of the law as a covenant of works; of which our leſſer catechiſm ſpeaks in this manner, 'When God created man, he entred into a cove-'nant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience.' For inſtead of this, the form of that covenant is altered by the

the ſaid act of aſſembly, from man's being obliged to perfect obedience, which was the condition of that covenant, and of life by it, to his being obliged to ſeek life and juſtification by his obedience; which is not at all the proper form of the covenant of works, but as a conſequence from it, and ſuch, as the covenant of works might have been fulfilled without regarding it. For, by ſeeking here, muſt be underſtood either aiming at, or claiming juſtification by our own obedience: but, now, if Adam had performed that perfect obedience therein required, he would have been juſtified, though he had never ſought or aimed at his own juſtification by it, but merely aimed at the glory of God, his Creator; and, though he was to have life by or for his obedience, yet he could never ſeek or claim life and juſtification by it, till once he had performed it perfectly.

So dangerous, then, is the altering the words of our ſtandards by any ſuch untenable gloſs, that this in particular will be found full of groſs error. For, if believers in Chriſt their not being under the law as a covenant of works, is the very ſame with their not being obliged to ſeek juſtification by their own obedience; it will plainly follow, that all the children of men now, eſpecially ſuch as are under the outward diſpenſation of the goſpel, are delivered from the command of the law as a covenant of works, equally with the believer, becauſe none of them are obliged to ſeek juſtification by their own obedience: and, if they be not under the command of the covenant of works, how can they be under the curſe of it? Where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion, and where no tranſgreſſion, there is no penalty: moreover, when none of theſe are, there is no need of Chriſt's obedience, either active or paſſive in their room, and ſo no need of a preached goſpel: this new way then which the aſſembly takes to explain the old truth, tends to deſtroy both law and goſpel. But it is plain, that though the law or covenant of works be a broken, yet it is a perpetually binding law; and though the ſinner be an inſolvent debtor, yet the debt both of obedience and ſatisfaction, lies upon his head, as long as he is under the law, and not under grace, through union to Chriſt the ſecond Adam, who came to pay that double debt: from which believers in Chriſt are alone free, through the imputation of his

his law fulfilling and juſtice ſatisfying righteouſneſs unto them.

The proper form of the commanding power of the law, as a covenant of works, lies in the connexion between perſonal obedience and eternal life; and this connexion ſtill ſtands in that law under which the unbeliever keeps himſelf by his unbelief; which therefore ſtill binds him both under the forfeiture of life which the law promiſed, and under an obligation to that obedience which had this life promiſed to it. This keeps all the lapſed race of Adam under an obligation, not to ſeek juſtification by their own obedience, but to deſpair of life and juſtification by the law, and to expect death and condemnation by it, according to the ſentence thereof paſſed againſt them, Gal. iii. 10. This ſtanding connexion between obedience, and life, and diſobedience, and death, in that law of works which they are under, holds them priſoners to the law and juſtice of God, as long as their debt to both is not paid. This connexion then, makes the unbeliever ſtill lie under the condemning power and curſe of the law; whereas, if he were not ſtill under the precept, he could not be under the penalty of that covenant. This alſo makes him need to ſeek life and juſtification by the obedience of Chriſt, for, if he were not under the foreſaid binding obligation of the law, both as to the DO and DIE of it, he would not need to ſeek juſtification to life, nor ſalvation from death, by the doing and dying, the obedience and ſatisfaction of Jeſus Chriſt. But the act of aſſembly 1722, does ſo much cloud and darken this truth, that it plainly ſuppoſes none are under the law as a covenant of works, except theſe that are under an obligation to ſeek juſtification by their own obedience; and this being an obligation none at all are under; whether believers or unbelievers, the common and valuable privilege of all the hearers of the goſpel, in their being obliged to ſeek juſtification only through the obedience and ſatisfaction of Jeſus Chriſt, is thus quite ſubverted, and, at the ſame time, the great diſtinguiſhing privilege of believers, in being not under the law but under grace, is by this act, quite overthrown and turned to nothing.

The ſaid aſſembly owns, in their act, that it is a preci-

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ous goſpel truth, That believers are free from the law as it is a covenant of works: and hence ſome may alledge that it is a ſtrained conſequence, from their alternative, viz. That they are not obliged to ſeek juſtification by their own obedience, to infer their deſtroying the believers privilege and making him no happier than the unbeliever. But that their meaning is not wreſted, is plain from their condemning, in the ſame act the following poſition, viz. 'That the 'law, as to believers, is really diveſted of its promiſe of 'life and threatning of death:' for hence it is evident, that they keep the believer under the commanding and condemning power of the law equally with the unbeliever: becauſe if the law, as to the believer, be not really diveſted of its promiſe of eternal life: then the believer is under the commanding power thereof, ſo that his obedience, as ſuch, hath the promiſe of life; and thus he muſt have another law title to life and eternal ſalvation than Chriſt's obedience; and if the law as to the believer, be not really diveſted of its threatning of death; then the believer is under the condemning power thereof, ſo as his ſin and diſobedience, even after he is in a juſtified ſtate, brings him under a legal obnoxiouſneſs to eternal death, wherefore by his obedience he muſt have a right to life and juſtification, according to the law; and by his diſobedience, he muſt come under condemnation and death, according to the ſame law; and conſequently, he is not at all delivered from the law as a covenant of works; ſo as to be thereby neither juſtified nor condemned; which is directly contradictory, both to the ſcriptures of truth, and to our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms

This doctrine is not only highly injurious to the revelation of the grace of God, concerning the believer's privilege; but is alſo diſhonouring and diſcrediting to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt our ſurety: while, notwithſtanding of his doing, upon which alone the believer's legal title to eternal life ſtands, and his dying, upon which alone his legal ſecurity from eternal death ſtands; yet the believer, by this corrupt doctrine, is kept from under the DO and DIE of the covenant of works; under the DO, becauſe the law hath ſtill the promiſe of life, even as to him, and the DIE, becauſe the law hath ſtill the threatning of death,

even as to him; and ſo he hath neither legal ſecurity for life by Chriſt's doing, nor legal ſecurity againſt death by Chriſt's dying. Thus by this act of aſſembly, the believer is condemned to remain ſtill under that old law, if thou doeſt, thou ſhalt live, and if thou doeſt not, thou ſhalt die; notwithſtanding all that Chriſt hath done and ſuffered for him.

It will not ſalve this matter that the aſſembly adds, after the foreſaid condemnatory words theſe following, *viz.* If by the law, they underſtand the moral law, the rule of life. For, as this, when connected with the foreſaid condemned poſition ſeems unintelligible; ſo, if it have any meaning at all, it muſt import their making the moral law, as it is a rule of life to the believer, to have a promiſe of life and a threatning of death; or to be a law giving life to them upon their obedience, and denouncing death and damnation to them upon their diſobedience: which ſeems a turning the goſpel to a law; or the law, as a rule of life, in the hand of Chriſt, to a law or covenant of works, ſpeaking life to the doer and death to the tranſgreſſor: and ſo, the matter comes ſtill to the ſame iſſue, tho' they would ſeem here to explain what they condemn.

And that the believer according to the aſſembly, is ſtill kept under the law as a covenant of works, will further appear, if it is conſidered; that though they ſeem to deny that believers in Chriſt are under the law as a covenant of works: yet while they aſſert, that the law as a rule of life, which the believer is under, is a law that is not diveſted of a promiſe of life, and a threatning of death, (which according to our Confeſſion, is the proper notion of the law as a covenant of works;) they likewiſe maintain, that holy obedience is properly a federal conditional mean, and has ſome kind of cauſality, in order to the obtaining of glory: from which it plainly follows, that believers are ſtill kept under the covenant of works; in regard that according to them, the believer's obedience has ſtill the promiſe of life, and his diſobedience the threatning of death, and in regard they likewiſe make their holy obedience to be properly a federal or conditional mean, in order to their obtaining eternal glory. But, whatever law they will have the believer under, as a law of life,

life or death, it is plain that the believer is under no ſuch law; ſeeing as the apoſtle ſays, Gal. iii. 18, 21, 22 'If 'the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promiſe— 'for if there had been a law given which could have given 'life, verily righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law; but 'the ſcripture hath concluded all under ſin; that the pro- 'miſe by faith of Jeſus Chriſt, might be given to them that 'believe.'

Therefore the preſbytery did, and hereby do, acknowledge aſſert and declare, in oppoſition to the foreſaid acts of aſſembly, 1720 and 1722. upon this head:

(1.) That, whatever the law, as a covenant of works, promiſeth or threatens in itſelf, and as to them that are under it; yet the law, as to the believer, is really diveſted of the promiſe of life and threatning of death; and that the believer holds his legal right and claim to eternal life, only by the perfect obedience of Chriſt to the law in his room; and his legal ſecurity from an eternal death, only by the compleat ſatisfaction of Chriſt to the juſtice of God, in the threatning of the law; and not by any law having promiſe of life to his own obedience, or threatning of death to his diſobedience: for, 'where ſin abounded grace 'did much more abound; that as ſin hath reigned unto 'death, even ſo might grace reign thro' righteouſneſs unto 'eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, Rom. v. 20, 21.

(2.) That as the moral law doth for ever bind all, as well juſtified perſons as others, to the obedience thereof: ſo, to aſſert that the moral law, ſtrictly and properly conſidered, as a covenant of works, is what the believer is wholly and altogether ſet free from; will never prove againſt the aſſerter thereof, that he maintains the believer is not under the law as a rule of life. And, to the ſame purpoſe, the presbytery maintain, that as the law is a covenant of works, believers are wholly and altogether ſet free from it, ſet free both from the commanding and condemning power thereof; or, as our Larger Catechiſm expreſſes it, delivered from the moral law as a covenant of works, ſo as thereby they are neither juſtified nor condemned; and that, from the maintaining of this truth, it will no ways follow, that the believer is not under the law as a rule of life.

(3.) That though it be the duty of all who hear the gospel, to ſeek after life and juſtification by the obedience of Chriſt, and not by their own; yet, while through unbelief they do not, ſo they remain under the law as a covenant of works, both in its commanding and condemning power; and that it is the peculiar privilege of true believers in Chriſt, to be free therefrom.

(4.) That though all unbelievers do remain under the law as a covenant of works, both in its commanding and condemning power; yet none of them are obliged to ſeek juſtification by their own obedience; but on the contrary, it is the great duty of the hearers of the goſpel, and alſo their ineſtimable privilege, to ſeek juſtification only thro' the obedience and ſatisfaction of Chriſt.

And the Presbytery do hereby likewiſe condemn theſe following poſitions which are countenanced by the foreſaid acts of aſſembly upon this head.

(1.) That the doctrine of the believer's being freed from the law as a covenant of works, whether in its commanding or condemning power, is a doctrine of licentiouſneſs, tending any way to free the believer from obligation to the law, as it is a rule of life. 'Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we eſtabliſh the law.'

(2.) That the believer his not being under the law, and his not being obliged to ſeek life by his own obedience, are propoſitions of the ſame import; as if unbelievers, under a goſpel diſpenſation, were equally free from the commanding power of the law, as a covenant of works, with believers; ſince they are not obliged to ſeek juſtification by their own obedience any more than believers. The presbytery therefore, condemn this doctrine, as highly prejeducial to truth relating to both the law, and the goſpel; and to the diſtinguiſhing privilege of the believer in Chriſt, his being not under the law, but under grace.

(3.) That the law, as to believers, is veſted with a promiſe of life, and threatning of death; ſo as their obedience is properly a federal or conditional mean, in order to ther obtaining eternal glory.

(4.) That unbelievers, in their being under the law as a covenant of works, are obliged to ſeek juſtification by their own obedience.

All

All which poſitions are injurious to truth, and oppoſite to the ſcriptures, and our Confeſſions of Faith and Catechiſms. Further,

IV. Concerning (what the aſſembly calls.)

The ſix Antinomian Paradoxes:

The aſſembly in their foreſaid act, *Anno* 1720. condemn the diſtinction which the author of the Marrow makes uſe of, for riding matches between the ſtate of an unbeliever, who is condemned already by the ſentence of the broken law, and the ſtate of a believer, for whom there is no condemnation; and for ſhewing, in what ſenſe the believer in Chriſt is bound to obey the law, and in what ſenſe he is delivered from it.

The author for this purpoſe, diſtinguiſheth between the law as it is the law of works, which he explains to be the law conſidered as a covenant of works, and the law as it is the law of Chriſt, by which he underſtands the law conſidered as the rule of obedience in the hand of Chriſt, who hath, as their ſurety, fulfilled the righteouſneſs of the law as a covenant in their room and ſtead.

For what reaſon the aſſembly condemns this diſtinction it is hard to conceive? Can it be thought that an aſſembly of the church of Scotland denies any difference between the law as a covenant of works, and the law as a rule of duty? If this foundation be deſtroyed, what can the righteous do who falleth ſeven times a day? For, according to this doctrine, when he falls into any, even the leaſt ſin, he falls under, and becomes liable unto the heavy ſentence of the law of works, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law to do them.* The reaſon is plain, becauſe according to the aſſembly's act, the law, even with reſpect to the believer, ſtill retains its covenant form contrary to ſcripture, Rom. vi. 14. Rom. vii. 2, 3, 4. and to the Confeſſion of Faith, chap. xix. § 6.

The aſſembly, in the condemnation of this diſtinction do ſimpliciter, condemn ſix propoſitions, called by them Antinomian Paradoxes: the moſt of which are the expreſs words of the Holy Ghoſt in ſcripture, and ſo muſt needs have

have a ſound ſenſe. If the aſſembly had dealt with that candour, which might have been expected from a court of Chriſt, they would have told in what ſenſe the author admits, and in what ſenſe he rejects theſe propoſitions; but, ſeeing the aſſembly has neglected this, it is proper to take a view thereof in the words of the author, pages 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203

There Neophytus craves of Evangeliſta, his judgment concerning the following propoſitions: (1.) 'That a believer is not under the law, but is altogether delivered from it;' (2.) 'That a believer doth not commit ſin;' (3) 'That the Lord can ſee no ſin in a believer;' (4) 'That the Lord is not angry with a believer for his ſins;' (5.) 'That the Lord doth not chaſtiſe a believer for his ſins;' (6.) 'That a believer hath no cauſe, neither to confeſs his ſins, nor to crave pardon at the hands of God for them: neither yet to faſt nor mourn, nor humble himſelf before the Lord for them.

Unto this Evangeliſta anſwers in the words following; 'Theſe points which ye have now mentioned, have occaſioned many needleſs and fruitleſs diſputes;—for, in one ſenſe, they may all of them be truly affirmed; and in another ſenſe, they may all of them be truly denied. Wherefore, if we would clearly underſtand the truth, we muſt diſtinguiſh betwixt the law as it is the law of works and as it is the law of Chriſt. Now, as it is the law of works, it may be truly ſaid, That a believer is not under the law, but is delivered from it, according to that of the apoſtle, Rom. vi. 14 *Ye are not under the law, but under grace:* And Rom. vii. 6 *But now we are delivered from the law,* And if believers be not under the law but are delivered from the law as it is a law of works, then though they ſin, yet they do not tranſgreſs the law of works; *For where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion,* Rom. iv. 15 And therefore ſaith the apoſtle John, *Whoſoever abideth in him ſinneth not,* 1 John iii. 6. that is (as I conceive) whoſoever abideth in Chriſt by faith, ſinneth not againſt the law of works. And if a believer ſin not againſt the law of works, then can God ſee no ſin in a believer, as a tranſgreſſion of that law, and therefore it is ſaid Numb. xxiii. 21. "He hath not beheld iniquity in

'in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſs in Iſrael.' 'And again it is ſaid, Jer. l. 20. "At that time the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none: and the ſins of Judah, and they ſhall not be found:" 'And in Cant. iv. 7. Chriſt ſaith concerning his ſpouſe, '"Behold, thou art all fair, my love; and there is no 'ſpot in thee." And if God can ſee no ſin in a believer 'then aſſuredly he is neither angry, nor doth chaſtiſe a believer for his ſins as a tranſgreſſion for that law: and 'hence it is, that the Lord ſaith, concerning his own people, that were believers, Iſa. xxvii. 4. *Anger is not in 'me;* and again, Iſa. liv. 9. The Lord ſpeaking comfortably to his ſpouſe the church, ſaith, "As I have ſworn 'that the waters of Noah ſhall no more go over the earth; 'ſo have I ſworn that I will no more be wroth with thee 'nor rebuke thee." Now, if the Lord be not angry with 'a believer, neither doth chaſtiſe him for his ſins, as they 'are any tranſgreſſion of the law of works; then hath a 'believer neither need to confeſs his ſins unto God, nor to 'crave pardon for them, nor yet to faſt nor mourn, nor 'humble himſelf for them, as conceiving them to be any 'tranſgreſſion of the law, as it is the law of works. Thus 'you ſee, that if you conſider the law in this ſenſe, then 'all theſe points follow: according as you ſay, our friend 'Antinomiſta hath endeavoured to perſuade you.'

'But if you do conſider the law, as it is the law of 'Chriſt then they do not ſo, but quite contrary. For as 'the law is the law of Chriſt, it may be truly ſaid, that 'a believer is under the law, and not delivered from it 'according to that of the apoſtle, 1 Cor. ix. 21. "Be not 'without law to God, but under the law to Chriſt;" and 'according to that of the ſame apoſtle, Rom. iii. 31. "Do 'we then make void the law thro' faith? God forbid: 'yea, (by faith) we eſtabliſh the law." And if a believer 'be under the law and not delivered from it, as it is the law 'of Chriſt; then, if he ſin he doth thereby tranſgreſs the law 'of Chriſt; and hence I do conceive it is that the apoſtle 'John ſaith both concerning himſelf and other believers, '1 John i. 8. "If we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive our'ſelves and the truth is not in us:" And ſo ſaith the apoſtle

'ſtle James, chap iii. 2. *In many things we offend all.* 'And if a believer tranſgreſs the law of Chriſt, then doubt-'leſs, he ſeeth it; for it is ſaid, Prov. v. 21. That the '*ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pon-*'*dereth all his goings:* And in Heb. ix. 13. it is ſaid, *All* '*things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom* '*we have to do.* And if the Lord doth ſee the ſins that 'a believer doth commit againſt the law, as it is the law 'of Chriſt, then doubtleſs he is angry with them: for it is 'ſaid, Pſal. cvi. 40. That becauſe the people *went a whor-*'*ing after their own inventions, therefore was the wrath* '*of the Lord kindled againſt his people, inſomuch that he* '*abhorred his own inheritance.* And in Deut i. 37. Mo-'ſes ſaith concerning himſelf, *The Lord is angry with him.* 'And if the Lord be angry with a believer for his tranſ-'greſſing the law of Chriſt, then aſſuredly (if need be) he 'will chaſtiſe him for it; for it is ſaid concerning the ſeed 'and children of Jeſus Chriſt, *If they forſake my law, and* '*walk not in my judgments, then will I viſit their tranſ-*'*greſſions with the rod, and their iniquities with ſtripes;* 'And, in 1 Cor. xi 30. it is ſaid, concerning believers, '*For this cauſe,* (namely, their unworthy receiving of the 'ſacrament) *many are weak and ſickly among you and* '*many ſleep.* And if the Lord be angry with believers, and 'do chaſtiſe them for their ſins, as they are a tranſgreſſion 'of the law of Chriſt; then hath a believer cauſe to con-'feſs his ſins unto the Lord, and to crave pardon for them; 'yea, and to faſt and mourn and humble myſelf for them, 'as conceiving them to be a tranſgreſſion of the law of 'Chriſt.'

From the above quotation it is plain, like a ſun beam, in what ſenſe the ſix propoſitions called Antinomian, are either true or falſe, according to the author; and how neceſſary the above diſtinction, of the law into the law of works and the law of Chriſt, is for clearing the true ſenſe of the above propoſitions, which are moſt ſcriptural. But the aſſembly by condemning the above diſtinction, have overclouded many precious truths; which cannot miſs to iſſue in a jumbling law and goſpel together and the bringing of believers under a ſpirit of bondage unto fear from which they are delivered by the grace and Spirit of the goſpel.

Neither

Neither have the aſſembly in their explicatory act, 1722 offered any thing of moment either for the clearing up of truth, or for their own neceſſary vindication: as will appear, if we conſider, (1.) That the author of the Marrow, page 267, cited by the act of aſſembly 1722, page 23, head 6. is there ſpeaking of the diſtinction betwixt law and goſpel ſtrictly taken, both which have their proper uſes, even to the believer: but he is not ſpeaking one word of the believer's not being in any ſenſe, under the law of works, or his being under any law. (2.) The aſſembly, in their ſaid act, 1722, for their own exoneration, ſay, that the aſſembly 1720, do only condemn the above diſtinction of the law, into the law of works and the law of Chriſt, as it is applied by the author, *viz* of the Marrow, for defending the ſix Antinomian paradoxes; From whence it neceſſarily follows, that theſe ſix points of doctrine are condemned by the aſſembly, according to the ſenſe put upon them, by the author's applying to them that diſtinction of the law, into the law of works, and the law of Chriſt; or, as the author explains himſelf, the law as a covenant and the law as a rule of obedience. And thus, theſe following precious truths of the everlaſting goſpel, ly buried, under the condemnatory ſentence of the general aſſembly of this national church, for above twenty years backward.

1*ſt*, That believers are not under the law as a covenant, but are altogether freed from it; though they are ſtill under it, as a rule of obedience.

2*dly*, That a believer doth not commit ſin, as it is a tranſgreſſion of the law of works; but when he ſins he tranſgreſſeth the law, conſidered as a rule of holineſs in the hand of a Mediator.

3*dly*, That God ſees no ſin in a juſtified believer under the covert of the perfect righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as a tranſgreſſion of the law of works; though he ſtill ſees and marks it, as a tranſgreſſion of the law of Chriſt.

4*thly*, That the Lord is not angry with a believer for his ſins, with a vindictive wrath; but, with a fatherly diſpleaſure.

5*thly*, That the Lord doth not chaſtiſe a believer for his ſins as an implacable enemy, with law-vengeance; but

with the rod of a father, not for their deſtruction but for their reformation.

6*thly*, That, though the ſins of believers conſidered as tranſgreſſions of the law or covenant of works, do deſerve eternal death; and though they are even many ways aggravated above the ſins of others; Yet ſeeing their ſins, conſidered as tranſgreſſions of the law or covenant of works, were laid over upon Chriſt, therefore a believer, when he faſts and mourns, and confeſſeth his ſins, ought to view them as laid over upon the Surety, purging away their guilt by his blood: And in the faith of remiſſion and forgiveneſs through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and of his deliverance from the commanding and condemning power of the law of works, thereby; as he is to faſt and mourn for, and confeſs his ſins, as to his concern with them in his juſtified eſtate, not as violations of the law of works, but only as violations of the law in the hand of a Mediator; and as committed againſt, and diſhonouring unto his reconciled God and Father in Chriſt.

Thus, by the doctrine of the foreſaid act, the foundation of all evangelical obedience is overturned, the wells of ſalvation, out of which we ſhould draw water with joy are ſtopt; and we are ſent back to the law as a covenant to ſeek righteouſneſs, life and comfort. Wherefore, in order to clear and maintain the foundations of goſpel obedience, and the ſprings of the believer's conſolation; the presbytery did, and hereby do, acknowledge, aſſert, and declare,

1*ſt*, That the diſtinction, as explained in the Marrow, is good and ſcriptural, *viz.* That there is a wide difference between the law as a covenant of works, and the law as a rule of holy obedience.

2*dly*, That a believer in Chriſt, is neither under the commanding nor condemning power of the law, as a covenant of works; although he be ſtill under the law as a rule of obedience in the hand of a Mediator.

3*dly*, That God ſeeth not iniquity in Jacob or in true believers as it is a tranſgreſſion of the covenant of works; but only, as it is a tranſgreſſion of the law in the hand of Chriſt, who bore our ſins in his own body on the tree.

4*thly*, That, though the elect, by nature be children of wrath

wrath even as others; yet, thro' the death and ſatisfaction of Chriſt, the Lord's vindictive anger is turned away from them; fury is not in him againſt any ſoul that is come to the blood of ſprinkling; and yet, he may and will be angry with his dear children, ſo as to viſit their iniquity with the rod, and their tranſgreſſions with ſtripes; but becauſe he will not take his love from Chriſt, nor break his covenant with him, therefore not with them, who are his ſeed.

5thly, That when a believer faſts, mourns for, and confeſſeth his ſins, he ought not to do it in a legal way, as one ſtanding under a covenant of works, either as to its precept or penalty; but he ought to do it with the hand of faith upon the head of the great ſacrifice and atonement as one whoſe perſon and duties are accepted in the beloved: and thus he ought to faſt, mourn for, and confeſs his ſins before his reconciled God and Father; believing that God, according to his promiſe, is merciful to his unrighteouſneſs and will remember his ſins no more.

Moreover, the presbytery did, and hereby do, condemn and reject the following erroneous and dangerous poſitions, taught by the aſſembly.

1ſt, That believers are under the law, and not altogether freed from it, as a covenant of works

2dly, That when a believer ſins, he ſins againſt the law of works, and therefore muſt be liable to the penalty thereof.

3dly, That God ſeeth iniquity in believers, as it is a violation of the old covenant of works, made with Adam in innocency; and conſequently that he ſees it with an eye of vindictive juſtice; notwithſtanding of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt, and their being under the covert of his law magnifying righteouſneſs.

4thly, That when God is angry with believers for their ſins, he purſues them upon the footing of the law of works; or, which is the ſame thing, with the ſame anger wherewith he purſued the ſurety, when he was made a curſe for them.

5thly, That when God corrects his children, he does it in his vindictive or revenging wrath, and not in a way of fatherly chaſtiſement.

6thly, That when a believer faſts, mourns for, confeſſeth, and ſeeks pardon of ſin he is to view himſelf as guilty of the violation of the law of works, notwithſtanding of his being dead to the law through faith in Jeſus Chriſt. Furthermore,

Concerning the obligation of obedience unto the law, and the evangelical grounds thereof.

Having thus eſſayed to vindicate the doctrine of the grace of God, from the injuries done to it by the acts of aſſembly 1720, 1722, and alſo, the obligations of the holy law as a rule of obedience every where aſſerted through the foregoing act of presbytery; yet, becauſe of the ſtrong propenſity of corrupt nature, to turn the grace of God into licentiouſneſs; therefore, the presbytery judge it expedient to conclude this their act, by ſhewing that the holy law, as a rule of duty, is ſtill obligatory under the goſpel; yea, that the goſpel yields ſtronger and more powerful incitements to obedience than any thing which the law itſelf, abſtractly conſidered, can afford. And,

1. This will appear from the epithets given unto the law, under the diſpenſation of the goſpel. Sometimes it is called the law of Chriſt; as in Gal. vi. 2 *Bear ye one another's burdens, and ſo fulfil the* LAW OF CHRIST; John xiv 15. *If ye love me keep* MY COMMANDMENTS; 1 Cor. ix. 21. *Being not without law to God but under the* LAW TO CHRIST: which expreſſions do plainly intimate that the law of the Creator is now iſſued forth to us in the hand of a Mediator; and that we, in our obedience, are to eye the authority of God in him, becauſe God's name is in him; and indeed, by proclamation from the excellent glory, we are enjoined to hear him or to receive the law from his mouth, as the great law-giver and king whom God hath ſet upon his holy hill of Zion. It is agreeably to this, that the moral law is called the royal law, James ii. 8. For the whole law and every article thereof, carries upon it a ſtamp of the royal authority of this king of ſaints; and all the royal ſeed of this great king have it engraved upon the tables of their hearts, by the power of his Spirit.

2. The

2. The law is given upon evangelical, and conſequently upon everlaſting grounds, which never can be antiquated or aboliſhed; for Exod. xx. 1, 2. '*God ſpake all theſe words ſaying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage.*' It is worthy of notice here, by what arguments the Lord inforces obedience to the moral law: the firſt is his infinite goodneſs and immutability; he is the great JEHOVAH, who is being itſelf, and who gives us our being, both in nature and grace; ſo that he has an abſolute ſovereignty over us, as the potſherds which his own hand hath made; but this argument alone is ſo awful, that it is ready to diſmay and drive us ſinners away from God; therefore he next draws us under his ſweet and gracious government with bands of love, by diſplaying himſelf as a God of love, grace and mercy in Chriſt, when he adds, I JEHOVAH am THY GOD, in the neareſt ſweeteſt and ſtrongeſt relations. And this comprehenſive promiſe, as it is ſet in the front of the whole law; ſo its annexed to many of the precepts in particular, as in Lev. chap. xix. Obedience to the law is next enforced, by the glorious work of man's redemption through Jeſus Chriſt, typified by the redemption of Iſrael from their Egyptian bondage; and all this our leſſer Catechiſm well expreſſeth. In the following words, 'That becauſe God is the Lord, and our 'God and Redeemer; therefore we are bound to keep all 'his commandments.' So then, the law of God, as it ſtands in relation to a covenant of grace, being founded upon goſpel grounds, it muſt be of perpetual obligation.

This will farther appear, if we conſider that,

3. The end of Chriſt's coming was not to deſtroy the law but to fulfil and eſtabliſh it Matth. v. 17. He hath fulfilled it as a covenant, by his own perſonal obedience as our ſurety; and having thus redeemed us from the hands of our enemies, he gives forth the law, as a perpetual rule of obedience to us; that we being delivered by him out of the hands of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our life. To the ſame purpoſe is that of the apoſtle, Rom. iii. 41. *Do we make void the law thro' faith? God forbid; yea, we eſtabliſh the law.* It is true indeed, Chriſt has

has for ever freed believers from the yoke of the ceremonial law; and alſo from the commanding and condemning power of the moral, as a covenant rigorouſly exacting obedience, as the condition of life, and forbidding ſin under the pain of eternal death, without affording ſtrength for obedience; yea through the grace of the goſpel both our perſons and imperfect obedience are accepted in the beloved; but yet Chriſt would not have it ſo much as enter into the thoughts of any that profeſs his name, that he came to diſſolve the obligation of the law as a rule of life: which appears in the forecited Mat. v. 17. 'Think 'not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets; I 'am not not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil:' on the contrary, he came to eſtabliſh the obligation of it to the end of the world: for (ſays he, ver. 18.) 'Verily I ſay unto 'you, till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one title ſhall 'in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.' And thus he vindicates it from the corrupt gloſſes of the Scribes and Phariſees, in his ſermon on the mount wherein he diſcovers its obligation, extent or ſpirituality.

4. Obedience and conformity to the holy law, is one of the great ends of our redemption by Jeſus Chriſt; for Tit. ii. 4. 'He gave himſelf for us that he might redeem us 'from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar peo-'ple zealous of good works.' And the apoſtle Peter tells that Chriſt hath redeemed us from our vain converſation, not with ſilver or gold, or ſuch corruptible things, but with his own precious blood. Wherefore they dreadfully counteract the very deſign of the death of Chriſt, and of the reign of grace through his righteouſneſs, who imagine that the doctrine of grace patronizes a lawleſs liberty in the way of ſin; for Chriſt died not to procure a liberty to ſin, but a liberty from ſin; according to Dan. ix. 24 'He came to 'finiſh the tranſgreſſion, and to make an end of ſins.' 1 John iii. 5. 'Ye know that he was manifeſted to take a-'way our ſins,' verſe 6. 'Whoſoever abideth in him, ſin-'neth not; whoſoever ſinneth, hath not ſeen him, neither 'known him.'

5. All the followers of Jeſus Chriſt are expreſly charged to remember the law of Moſes, even after the actual riſing of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, in his incarnation, and after his ſaving

ſaving manifeſtation in their ſouls, for, it is promiſed, Mal. iv. 2. 'But unto you that fear my name ſhall the Sun of 'Righteouſneſs ariſe with healing in his wings, and ye ſhall 'go forth and grow up as calves in the ſtall;' And then it follows, verſe 4. 'Remember ye the law of Moſes my 'ſervant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all 'Iſrael.' Where, by the law of Moſes, we are not to underſtand the ceremonial law which being the ſhadow of good things to come, did evaniſh at the exhibition of the Son of God in the fleſh: but it is the law of Moſes, which was publiſhed by God in mount Sinai: that law which was written by God's finger on tables of ſtone, and laid up in the ark, to be preſerved there, as a binding rule of obedience upon all unto the end of the world. Such a regard had Chriſt unto this law, and the honour of it, that he not only fulfilled the righteouſneſs thereof as a covenant, by his holy obedience: but in his example, hath left us a pattern of all goſpel holineſs, and he requires of all who are called by his name, that they depart from iniquity that they ſhould follow him, and be holy as he is holy; and declares that, except their faith in him bring forth the fruits of obedience unto his law, their faith is dead: accordingly, at the laſt day, their faith in him will be tried by the fruits thereof, Math. xxv. 34,—35.

Thus it appears that the grace of the goſpel doth no way diſſolve the obligation of the royal law, as a rule of obedience, but that on the contrary it doth eſtabliſh and ſweeten the ſame. Now that which ſweetens it to believers, is, that it is the law of Chriſt: it is his commandments, and therefore not grievous: his yoke, and therefore eaſy; his burden, and therefore light, The law was given by him upon mount Sinai: he was in the midſt of that general aſſembly of angels conveened at the publication of the law, even he who aſcended up on high, and led captivity captive; hence is that expreſſion, Gal iii. 19. 'It was or-'dained by angels in the hand of a Mediator.' It was ordained by Chriſt authoritatively and by angels miniſterially. Chriſt is the great Mediator thro' whoſe hand the law is tranſmitted to us: and this ſerves wonderfully to ſweeten it; for, he not only ſlays the enmity between God and man; but, he alſo reconciles the law to ſinners, and re-

conciles ſinners to the law. There is a mutual enmity between the law and every ſinner, by nature: the law accuſes, curſes, and condemns, the ſinner, and the ſinner is not ſubject unto the law, neither indeed can be, becauſe it is oppoſite unto his luſts

Now Chriſt as he reconciles God and man; ſo he reconciles the law to the ſinner, and the ſinner to the law. (1.) He reconciles the law to the ſinner, that believes in him; for, againſt ſuch there is no law, Gal. v 23. Rom. viii. 1. There is no condemning law nor purſuing law, Rom. viii. 32, 33. Though the law as it is in the hand of an abſolute God, is an enemy unto the ſinner out of Chriſt, condemning and purſuing him Gal iii 10. yet ſo ſoon as he is in Chriſt, it neither condemns nor purſues him, but it becomes a friendly counſellor, to direct him in the way of duty; and as ſuch it ſays, this is the way, walk ye in it. (2.) As Chriſt reconciles the law to the ſinner, ſo he reconciles the heart of the ſinner, to the law, inſomuch, that he delights in the law of the Lord after the inward man; he eſteems all God's commandments concerning all things to be right; and is ready to ſay, with David 'O how love I thy law!' Pſal. cxix. 97 'Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my 'footſteps ſlip not,' Pſal. xvii. 5.

And all this Chriſt ſweetly effectuates upon the ſinner in a day of power, by the execution of his ſeveral offices, as a Prophet, Prieſt, and King. As a Prophet, he interprets and opens up the law in its purity and ſpirituality: he opens our eyes, to behold wonderous things out of his law. As a Prieſt, he ſatisfies juſtice for our ſins, covers our obedience, perfumes our ſervices, and procures our acceptance by the ſweet incenſe of his interceſſion. And as a King, he tranſmits the law to his ſubjects with the ſtamp of his authority, as he is the great God our Saviour, and as God is in him a reconciled God proclaiming his name, *The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth*, Exod. xxxiv. 6. Thus the law in the hand of a Mediator, or as it ſtands in ſubordination to the grace of the goſpel, is not to be conſidered as a rule of acceptance for juſtification, but as a rule of obedience and ſanctification; by which obedience we teſtify our gratitude, and glorify God. And here,

1. Our

1. Our obedience to the law is to proceed upon evangelical principles. Now, the leading principle of obedience to the law, is faith in Jesus Christ; hence all true obedience is called the obedience of faith. The Spirit of life that is in Christ Jesus, enters into the dead soul, and works faith in it, whereby it is united to Christ as a head of influence; and then the life it lives is *by the faith of the Son of God. I live*, says Paul, *yet not I but Christ liveth in me.* All acts of obedience in believers are acts of the life of Christ in them. All acts of obedience performed by an unbelieving sinner, are but dead works: whereas the believer, having the life and Spirit of Christ in him, presents himself a living sacrifice to God which is our reasonable service.

2. Gospel obedience to the holy law, proceeds upon evangelical motives; namely, the consideration of the matchless grace, love and mercy of God manifested in Christ, faith viewing the excellency of God's loving kindness, the height and depth, the breadth and length whereof passeth all knowledge; the soul thereupon cries out, 'Lord what wilt thou have me to do? What shall 'I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?' As God's love to us moved him to do all that he hath done for us, in the work of redemption, so, that faith, which worketh by love, makes the soul active to do all for his glory and honour.

3. Gospel obedience is influenced by evangelical affections, such as love, delight, zeal, filial fear, and the like; according as the apostle speaks, Gal v. 6. *Faith worketh by love.* Faith, as was said, discovers the transcendent love of God in Christ; and, as one fire kindles another, so the love of God, apprehended by faith, both kills the enmity of the heart, and kindles a flame of love there toward God in Christ, that many waters cannot quench, and all floods are not able to drown; and this love powerfully influences obedience to the holy law, 'if ye love me, says Christ, 'keep my commandments. Who shall separate 'us, says the apostle, from the love of Christ?' The love of self influences the obedience of the legalist, but the love of Christ constrains the believer: and this love begets

delight, a ready mind, and fervency of ſpirit in ſerving the Lord, Pſal. cxix. 35. Rom. xii. 11.

4. Goſpel obedience is performed to a goſpel end, which is the honour of Chriſt, and the glory of God in him: for God will have all men to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; and thus it is that as in Rom. xiv. 8. *We live unto the Lord,* doing all to the honour of Chriſt, and the glory of God in him: Chriſt is called the Alpha and Omega the firſt and the laſt: ſo ought he to be unto us, in the whole of our obedience, the beginning and the ending of all we do. The unregenerate ſinner acts from himſelf and for himſelf according to Hoſ. x. 1. *Iſrael is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit to himſelf:* Self is the firſt principle and laſt end of all that he doth; and therefore in all his doings, he is wholly rejected of God; but with the believer as ſuch, Chriſt is the firſt principle of his life of holineſs, and his laſt end therein: He only muſt bear the glory of what he has wrought for us, and of what he works in us or by us, in a way of doing or ſuffering, Rev. v. 12.

To conclude, as obedience to the holy law of God, was indiſpenſibly required of innocent man, by an obligation neceſſarily ariſing from the very nature of the Creator and creature, and the eſſential relation betwixt them: So mankind having ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God, the whole diſpenſation of the free grace and love of God, through Jeſus Chriſt, is juſt calculate for reſtoring fallen man unto a capacity of glorifying God, in time and eternity, by obedience unto the eternal and holy law: 'He hath choſen us in him before the foundation of the world that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before 'him in love, Eph. i, 4. Jeſus Chriſt gave himſelf for us, 'that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify 'unto himſelf a peculiar people zealous of good works,' Tit. ii. 13, 14, 'Herein is my Father glorified, ſays he, 'John xv. 8. that ye bear much fruit.' And ſo, he muſt preſent the church unto himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle or any ſuch thing, Eph. v. 27. Thus, goſpel obedience is of ſuch importance to the diſpenſation of grace, that it is a principal end whereunto the ſame is eſſentially ſubſervient and whereunto it only is effectual;

ſo

ſo that according to the believer's experience and improvement of the free grace and love of God in the goſpel, accordingly he will neceſſarily, through the whole, aim at, and preſs forward unto a glorifying of God by perfect conformity unto his holy law. But the peculiar encouragement and acceſs we have unto holineſs, under the diſpenſation of grace, lies in this; that goſpel obedience muſt be performed, not to juſtify our perſons, but to honour glorify, and declare our gratitude to him who juſtifies us freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus.

Now man being at firſt married to the law as a huſband, he hath a ſtrong propenſity to cleave to this huſband, and to ſeek life and ſalvation by doing the works thereof, and it is only the power of efficacious grace, that can bring a ſinner to renounce that firſt husband, and to take on with that new and better husband, who is raiſed from the dead: yea, after the ſoul is actually married to Chriſt, through the remaining legality of the heart, it is ready at every turn, to caſt a ſquint look back unto its old husband, the law of works. Of this the apoſtle complains, Gal. iii. 3.——*Having begun in the Spirit are ye now made perfect by the fleſh?* that is, do ye imagine to attain perfection in holineſs or ſanctification, by returning back to the law, and the works thereof, for righteouſneſs and life?

There are therefore ſundry legal ends, that ſhould be carefully avoided, whether in our covenanting, or in any other acts of obedience; as,

1. We muſt not perform the duties of the law for righteouſneſs and juſtification; for this is to blot out that name of Chriſt, Jer. xxiii. 9. THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS: Nor,

2. To give unto God a recompence or requital for his mercies, It is indeed the higheſt ingratitude, not to acknowledge him as our benefactor, but we can never recompenſe him; becauſe the creature that hath its being and its all from him can never give any thing to him but what is his own: 'If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him, or 'what receiveth he of thine hand?' Job xxxv. 7. And therefore, it well becomes us to acknowledge, when we

have done all that we are unprofitable ſervants, and that our goodneſs extendeth not unto him

3. We muſt not imagine that, by our acts of obedience, we make God amends for the diſhonour done to him by our diſobedience; not that thereby we make any atonement and propitiation for our ſins; for this were to put our obedience in the room of Chriſt our only propitiation.

4. Neither muſt we imagine that by our obedience and duties, God is moved to beſtow his mercies upon us: for whatever God beſtows upon a ſinner, is of mere grace and mercy, not for any works of righteouſneſs done by us.

5. We muſt not imagine, that our obedience to the law doth any way fix our title to eternal life; or that it is any federal, conditional mean, in order to our poſſeſſing eternal life. This indeed were to lay another foundation than that which God hath laid in Zion: for both our title to eternal life, and our actual poſſeſſion thereof at the end of the day, to lean wholly upon our union with Chriſt by a faith of God's operation; and another foundation can no man lay. All our hopes and expectations of ſalvation, muſt be founded upon God's covenant of grace and promiſe, eſtabliſhed in the ſecond Adam; the condition of which was fulfilled by him, the covenant-head, in his obedience unto the death. Thus, David goes into eternity upon this bleſſed bottom, ſinging that ſong, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. *Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me,* (viz. in Chriſt my new covenant-head) *an everlaſting covenant, ordered in all things and ſure: for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire.*

Now, faith acting upon this covenant of rich and free grace, has a manifold influence upon our obedience to the law; which may be cleared in conſidering.

The connexion betwixt God's covenant of grace and our covenant of duties, and the influence the one has upon the other.

The covenant of grace which is made with, and ſtands faſt

faſt in Chriſt our glorious head, lays us under much further obligation to duty and ſervice, than the covenant of works, even while it ſtood in the firſt Adam. We are more conſtrained to obedience under the former, than ever Adam in a ſtate of innocency, was under the latter; and our obligation to vow and pay our vows to covenant and perform or keep our covenants of duty and ſervice to God in Chriſt, is yet more ſtrengthned and furthered by our being under a fuller and clearer diſpenſation of the covenant of grace, than what theſe had who lived under the Old Teſtament, or the dark legal diſpenſation of this covenant of grace. How the obligation is ſtrengthned, and what influence the covenant of grace hath upon our covenant of duty, ſervice, and obedience may appear in the following reſpects.

Firſt, in reſpect of life, which Chriſt came to give, and to give more abundantly, John x. 10. Our life being in the ſecond Adam, ſecured or hid with Chriſt in God; the more of this is communicated to us, the more are we in caſe for lively ſervice, and bound to devote the life that comes to us by the death and life of Chriſt, unto the obedience of him who died for us; that we who live, ſhould not henceforth live unto ourſelves but unto him who died for us, and roſe again, 2 Cor. v. 15.

Secondly, In reſpect of light, which ſhines more brightly in the goſpel. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, given there, to inform the mind, transform the heart, and reform the life, 2 Cor. iii. 18. obliges us to walk as children of light, Eph. v. 8. The more we ſee in goſpel light, how Chriſt hath ſaved us, by fulfilling the law perfectly for us as a covenant of works, the more we are conſtrained to glorify him by our conformity to the law as a rule of duty and obedience, Gal. ii. 19, 20. Rom. vii. 4.

Thirdly, In reſpect of liberty: ſpiritual liberty, as well as ſpiritual life and light, is greater and more glorious, by the more plentiful effuſion of the Spirit in the goſpel diſpenſation of the covenant of grace, than what we could have had either by the old covenant of works, or the old legal diſpenſation of the new covenant, 2 Cor. iii. 7 8, 9, 10, 11, 17. If the Son make us free, then are we free indeed

indeed, John viii. 36. This is a freedom that looſes us from ſin, and binds us to duty, Rom vi. 17, 18. Pſal. cxvi. 16.

Fourthly, In reſpect of love and gratitude, to which nothing leads us ſo much, as the diſplay of the grace and love of God to us in the new covenant. This love kills our enmity and begets love, ſo that the love of Chriſt conſtrains us to his ſervice, 2 Cor. v. 14 being drawn powerfully with the bands of love, we run chearfully the way of his commandments.

Fifthly, In reſpect of joy, which the knowledge of the joyful ſound of the goſpel brings in more plentifully, even joy unſpeakable and full of glory. This joy of the Lord is our ſtrength, encouraging us to walk in the light of his countenance, Pſal. lxxxix. 15, 16, 17. and joyfully to devote ourſelves and our ſervice to him.

Sixthly. In reſpect of hope; for as the goſpel opens the door of faith, that we may enter into Chriſt, and cloſe with him for ſanctification as well as righteouſneſs, and ſo be in caſe for the duties of holineſs outwardly; having the heart purified by faith to the exerciſe of grace inwardly; ſo the goſpel opens the door of hope, even the hope of heaven and eternal life, at the end of our courſe of goſpel obedience. By the goſpel of Chriſt of his death and reſurrection, we are begotten to a lively hope of being like him, by ſeeing him as he is; 'and every man that hath this hope in him 'purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure,' 1 John iii. 2, 3.

Seventhly, In reſpect of power, or divine virtue and efficacy, whereof eſpecially the goſpel diſpenſation of the new covenant is the channel. It is ſaid to be 'the power of 'God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth:——for 'therein is the righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to 'faith,' Rom. i. 16, 17. Thus, as it is the revelation of grace reigning through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt unto eternal life, it is the organ of the power of God unto our ſalvation; and ſo it has not only a moral argumentative influence upon holineſs, but alſo a phyſical and powerful operative influence, drawing us with the bands of love unto his ſervice, and pulling down the ſtrong holds of ſin which ſtand in oppoſition thereunto, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

Eightly,

Eightly, In reſpect of the promiſe of the covenant of grace, as it is a covenant promiſing all grace both habitual and actual, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. Grace for performing every duty required in the precept of the law, as given forth to us in the promiſe of the goſpel: and, as we cannot ſet about vowing or reſolving to perform any duty commanded in the law, without the grace promiſed in the goſpel; ſo the grace here promiſed, is to be apprehended and depended upon by faith, as the great encouragement to vow and reſolve upon obedience, ſaying with David, Pſal. cxix. 106. 'I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will 'keep thy righteous judgments.' As we have here the promiſe of the Spirit in the plentiful effuſion thereof, to make us fruitful in holineſs, Iſa xliv. 3, 5. the promiſe of ſtrength, to walk and run in the way of the Lord, Iſa. xl. 29, 31. the promiſe of recovery, in caſe of failures and decays, Hoſ. xiv. 7. the promiſe of perſeverance to the end in a courſe of goſpel obedience, Jer. xxxii. 40. 1 Pet. i. 5. So having theſe and the like promiſes, that by theſe we may be partakers of the divine nature, we are encouraged to 'cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit 'perfecting holineſs in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

Ninthly, In reſpect of the authority enjoining obedience upon us, and calling us to devote ourſelves and our ſervice to him. Tho' this authority is originally the ſame that enjoined obedience upon man in the firſt covenant; yet it appears to us in the goſpel glaſs, more amiable and lovely: but its being not the authority of an abſolute God, but of God in Chriſt, reconciling the world to himſelf. While God is related unto us, as our God and Redeemer, we are laid under the ſtongeſt obligations to duty and obedience: according to the import of the preface to the ten commandments, "That becauſe God is the Lord and our God and "Redeemer; therefore we are bound to keep all his com-"mandments.

Tenthly, In reſpect of the furniture we have in our new covenant head; the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Having in him righteouſneſs for acceptance, and ſtrength for aſſiſtance, in every duty, and particularly in ſolemn vowing of obedience to him, Iſa. xliv. 3, 4, 5. the Spirit of all grace being above meaſure in our glorious head, for our uſe and behoof:

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indeed, John viii. 36. This is a freedom that looſes us from ſin, and binds us to duty, Rom vi. 17, 18. Pſal. cxvi. 16.

Fourthly, In reſpect of love and gratitude, to which nothing leads us ſo much, as the diſplay of the grace and love of God to us in the new covenant. This love kills our enmity and begets love, ſo that the love of Chriſt conſtrains us to his ſervice, 2 Cor. v. 14. being drawn powerfully with the bands of love, we run chearfully the way of his commandments.

Fifthly, In reſpect of joy, which the knowledge of the joyful ſound of the goſpel brings in more plentifully, even joy unſpeakable and full of glory. This joy of the Lord is our ſtrength, encouraging us to walk in the light of his countenance, Pſal. lxxxix. 15, 16, 17. and joyfully to devote ourſelves and our ſervice to him.

Sixthly, In reſpect of hope; for as the goſpel opens the door of faith, that we may enter into Chriſt, and cloſe with him for ſanctification as well as righteouſneſs, and ſo be in caſe for the duties of holineſs outwardly; having the heart purified by faith to the exerciſe of grace inwardly; ſo the goſpel opens the door of hope, even the hope of heaven and eternal life, at the end of our courſe of goſpel obedience. By the goſpel of Chriſt, of his death and reſurrection, we are begotten to a lively hope of being like him, by ſeeing him as he is; 'and every man that hath this hope in him 'purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure,' 1 John iii. 2, 3.

Seventhly, In reſpect of power, or divine virtue and efficacy, whereof eſpecially the goſpel diſpenſation of the new covenant is the channel. It is ſaid to be 'the power of 'God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth:——for 'therein is the righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to 'faith,' Rom. i. 16, 17. Thus, as it is the revelation of grace reigning through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt unto eternal life, it is the organ of the power of God unto our ſalvation; and ſo it has not only a moral argumentative influence upon holineſs, but alſo a phyſical and powerful operative influence, drawing us with the bands of love unto his ſervice, and pulling down the ſtrong holds of ſin which ſtand in oppoſition thereunto, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

Eightly,

Eightly, In reſpect of the promiſe of the covenant of grace, as it is a covenant promiſing all grace both habitual and actual, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. Grace for performing every duty required in the precept of the law, as given forth to us in the promiſe of the goſpel: and, as we cannot ſet about vowing or reſolving to perform any duty commanded in the law, without the grace promiſed in the goſpel; ſo the grace here promiſed, is to be apprehended and depended upon by faith, as the great encouragement to vow and reſolve upon obedience, ſaying with David, Pſal. cxix. 106. 'I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will 'keep thy righteous judgments.' As we have here the promiſe of the Spirit in the plentiful effuſion thereof, to make us fruitful in holineſs, Iſa xliv. 3, 5. the promiſe of ſtrength, to walk and run in the way of the Lord. Iſa. xl. 29, 31. the promiſe of recovery, in caſe of failures and decays, Hoſ. xiv. 7. the promiſe of perſeverance to the end in a courſe of goſpel obedience, Jer. xxxii. 40. 1 Pet. i. 5. So having theſe and the like promiſes, that by theſe we may be partakers of the divine nature, we are encouraged to 'cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit 'perfecting holineſs in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

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we are called to be 'ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt 'Jeſus, 2 Tim. ii. 1 to be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the 'power of his might,' Eph. vi. 10. by whoſe ſtrengthning we can do all things, Phil iv. 13. This furniture we have always in him as our new covenant head, and always acceſs to the benefit of it by faith, the proper language whereof is, 'ſurely in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength,' Iſa. xliv. 24. and as without this faith, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God by any duty or ſervice; ſo, by this faith, we are in caſe to pleaſe God, and ſerve him ſpiritually and acceptably. There is no compariſon between the furniture we once had in the firſt Adam, and this furniture we have in Chriſt: which is no leſs than all the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelling in him, as we alſo are compleat in him, Col. ii. 9, 10. 'And of his fulneſs have we all re-'ceived, and grace for grace,' John i. 16. according to his promiſe, 'My grace is ſufficient for thee: for my ſtrength 'is made perfect in weakneſs,' 2 Cor. xii. 9. As therefore we are called to 'work out our own ſalvation with fear and 'trembling; for it is God which worketh in us both to 'will and to do, of his good pleaſure,' Phil. ii. 12, 13. and to *ſanctify ourſelves*, becauſe he is the Lord that *ſanctifies us*, Lev. xx. 7, 8. So as for the great work of covenanting to ſerve and obey him, we may with humble confidence ſet about it, in the faith of this new covenant furniture we have in Jeſus Chriſt; ſaying as it is in Pſal. lxxi. 16. 'I will go on in the ſtrength of the Lord God; I 'will make mention of thy righteouſneſs, even of thine 'only.'

Extracted——

JOHN POTTS *Pr. Cls.*

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F I N I S.

A C T

OF THE

Associate Presbytery,

For Renewing the

National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the Three Nations.

IN

A Way and Manner agreeable to our present Situation and Circumstances in this Period.

G L A S G O W:

Printed by JOHN BRYCE, and sold at his Shop in the Salt-market. 1771.

THE INTRODUCTION.

AGREEABLY to ſcripture precepts and patterns of perpetual obligation, and uſe, the reformation of religion in Scotland hath thro' the ſeveral periods thereof, been carried on in a way of covenanting: wherein all the kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, did concur *Anno* 1643. And it was in purſuance of covenant engagements then come under, that pure ſtandards of doctrine, in our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, were eſtabliſhed; and that a great pitch of reformation, as to the worſhip and government of the church was attained unto, in our directory for the public worſhip of God, and form of preſbyterial church government.

In England and Ireland theſe covenant engagements were ſoon forgot: ſo as the reformation, then ariſing did ſpeedily give way to an apoſtaſy, which hath lamentably increaſed hitherto; and, in Scotland, a door began to be actually opened, by the public reſolutions, *Annis* 1650 and 1651. for defection from former covenants, and reformation, which hath wofully prevailed unto this day.

The Aſſociate Presbytery, being led out, in the courſe of ſovereign and holy providence, to eſſay the revival of reformation, have judged it their duty to eſſay, for this purpoſe, the revival of covenanting. Accordingly,

The preſbytery did, ſome years ago, appoint a committee of their number to prepare and lay before them, an overture anent the renovation of our ſolemn covenants. Hereupon the overture (of an Act of the Aſſociate Preſbytery, for renewing the national covenant of Scotland, and the ſolemn league and covenant of the three nations, in a way and manner agreeable to our preſent ſituation and circumſtances in this period) was laid before the preſbytery. And after the ſaid overture had overgone ſundry readings, reaſon-

reaſonings and amendments, it was approven of, at Edinburgh, Oct. 21. 1742. by the unanimous vote of all members preſent, excepting Mr. Nairn. However, the preſbytery, deſirous of proceeding with great deliberation in a matter of ſo much importance, agreed that there ſhould be acceſs for all members, preſent or abſent, to propoſe any difficulties they might have, againſt next meeting. And the matter was left in this ſtate, from one meeting to another, till December, 23. 1742.

At the meeting in Stirling, December 23. 1742. Mr. Nairn formerly diſſented from the paragraph that confeſſed the evil of the Anti-government ſcheme which ſome formerly in acceſſion to the presbytery, had eſpouſed: and at the ſame time, ſome other members propoſed a ſcruple about the ſaid paragraph, ſtanding in the confeſſion of ſins, as they conceived, that the reduplication of the bond thereupon, would amount into a blending of civil and eccleſiaſtical matters in the oath of God, in renewing the covenants, which is not competent unto a church judicatory. This ſcruple being again inſiſted upon, when the preſbytery was met at Edinburgh in February 1743, they did thereupon unanimouſly tranſlate that paraphraſe in the following Act.

'At Edinburgh, the third day of February, One thouſand 'ſeven hundred and forty three years.'

'THE preſbytery are of opinion, that, in regard they 'had formerly agreed, that it was not ſuitable to 'their preſent circumſtances, to blend civil and eccleſiaſtic 'matters in the oath of God, in renewing the covenants; 'becauſe that the cognizance of civil affairs belongs not 'properly to them as a church judicatory, and ſome mem-'bers being of the mind, that the reduplication of the oath 'upon that clauſe of the confeſſion of ſins, which was the 'occaſion of the diſſent, would upon the matter, amount 'to the foreſaid blending: that therefore the ſaid clauſe 'ſhould be left out. Yet that none may miſconſtruct the 'principles of the preſbytery, on the head of the civil ma-'giſtrate; although the national apoſtaſy, under which 'the Lord's remnant through the land have been groan-'ing, while our rulers have not only neglected, but contra-

'dicted

'dicted their duty of eſpouſing and ſupporting the covenan-
'ted principles and reformation of this church whereby
'they have greatly provoked the Lord to anger, be ground
'of humiliation before the Lord: yet the preſbytery do
'hereby condemn the dangerous extreme that ſome have
'gone into, of impunging the preſent civil authority over
'theſe nations, and ſubjection thereunto in lawful com-
'mands, on account of the want of theſe qualifications,
'which magiſtrates ought to have by the word of God and
'our covenants; even tho' they allow us in the free exer-
'ciſe of our religion, and are not manifeſtly unhinging the
'liberties of the kingdom; an opinion and practice con
'trary to the plain tenor of ſcripture, and to the known
'principles of this church in her confeſſions and covenants,
'and of all other reformed churches: and that ſome few
'others carry their zeal againſt the defection and evils of
'the times, to the dangerous extreme of eſpouſing prin-
'ciples in favour of propagating religion by offenſive arms:
'quite contrary to that diſpoſition, which ought to be in
'all the profeſſed followers of Chriſt, who came not to
'deſtroy men's lives, but to ſave them. And likewiſe the
'preſbytery agree, that, unleſs the Rev. Mr. Nairn, retract
'the principles contained in the ſaid diſſent, that tend to
'overthrow civil magiſtracy, they will proceed againſt him
'according to the rules of this church.'

At after meetings, there were made ſome other amend-ments upon, as alſo ſundry additions unto the Act for renewing the covenants; whereupon the presbytery being met in Stirling Dec. 23. 1743. after ſerious deliberation and prayer the queſtion was put, Approve of this act as now amended and enlarged, in order to the renovation of our covenants, or not? And it carried unanimouſly APPROVE, wherefore the preſbytery did approve and enact accordingly, and ordered the ſame to be publiſhed; the tenor whereof follows, immediately after the national covenant, and the ſolemn league and covenant; as it is the renovation of theſe which this act propoſeth.

N B.

N. B. *Only the national covenant, as it was entred into annis* 1580 *and* 1581, *(without the bond wherein it was renewed, anno* 1638,) *and the ſolemn league and covenant (without the ſolemn acknowledgment of ſins and engagements to duties, anno* 1648) *are here preſixed to the following act, agreeably to the deſign of the ſaid act, and unto the example of our reformers, Anno* 1638, *who renewed the national covenant by a new bond, in place of that bond wherewith it had been renewed and ſworn, anno* 1590, *and which they had omitted. And the presbytery's procedure in this whole matter is more fully explained and vindicated in their anſwers to reaſons of diſſent,* &c. *p* 27.——39. *lately publiſhed.*

THE

National Covenant;

O R,

The CONFESSION OF FAITH; ſubſcribed at firſt by the king's majeſty and his houſhold in the year 1580, thereafter by perſons of all ranks in the year 1581, by ordinance of the lords of ſecret council, and acts of the general aſſembly, ſubſcribed again by all ſorts of perſons in the year 1590 by a new ordinance of council, at the deſire of the general aſſembly, with a general bond for the maintaining of the true Chriſtian religion, and the king's perſon; and together with a reſolution and promiſe, for the cauſes after expreſſed, to maintain the true religion, and the king's majeſty, according to the foreſaid Confeſſion and acts of parliament, ſubſcribed by Barons, nobles, gentlemen, burgeſſes, miniſters and Commons, in the year 1638, approven by the general aſſembly 1638, and 1639, and ſubſcribed again by perſons of all ranks and qualities in the year 1639, by an ordinance of the council, upon the ſupplication of the general aſſembly

aſſembly, and act of the general aſſembly ratified by an act of parliament 1640: and ſubſcribed by king Charles II. at Spey, June 23. 1649, and at Scoon, Jan. 1650.

WE all and every one of us underwritten, proteſt, that after long and due examination of our own conſciences in matters of true and falſe religion, we are now throughly reſolved in the truth by the word and Spirit of God; and therefore we believe with our hearts, confeſs with our mouths, ſubſcribe with our hands, and conſtantly affirm before God and the whole world, that this only is the true Chriſtian faith and religion, pleaſing to God and bringing ſalvation to men, which now is by the mercy of God revealed to the world by the preaching of the bleſſed evangel; and is received, believed and defended by many and ſundry notable churchand realms, but chiefly by the church of Scotland, the king's majeſty and three eſtates of this realm, as God's eternal truth, and only ground of our ſalvation: as more particularly is expreſſed in the Confeſſion of our faith eſtabliſhed and publicly confirmed by ſeveral acts of parliaments, and now of a long time hath been openly profeſſed by the king's majeſty, and the whole body of this realm both in borough and land. To the which Confeſſion and form of religion we willingly agree in our conſcience in all points, as unto God's undoubted truth and verity, grounded only upon his written word. And therefore we abhor and deteſt all contrary religion and doctrine; but chiefly all kinds of Papiſtry in general and particular heads, even as they are now damned and confuted by the word of God and church of Scotland. But in ſpecial we deteſt and refuſe the uſurped authority of that Roman Antichriſt upon the ſcriptures of God, upon the church the civil magiſtrate and conſciences of men: all his tyrannous laws made upon indifferent things againſt our Chriſtian liberty; his erroneous doctrine againſt the ſufficiency of the written word, the perfection of the law, the offices of Chriſt and his bleſſed evangel: his corrupted doctrine concerning original ſin, our natural inability and rebellion to God's law, our juſtification by faith only, or imperfect ſanctification and obedience to the law: the nature, number, and uſe of the holy ſacraments: his five baſtard

baſtard ſacraments, with all his rites ceremonies and falſe doctrine, added to the miniſtration of the true ſacraments without the word of God: his cruel judgment againſt infants departing without the ſacrament: his abſolute neceſſity of baptiſm; his blaſphemous opinion of tranſubſtantiation, or real preſence of Chriſt's body in the elements, and receiving of the ſame by the wicked, or bodies of men: his diſpenſation with ſolemn oaths, perjuries and degrees of marriage forbidden in the word; his cruelty againſt the innocent divorced; his deviliſh maſs: his blaſphemous prieſthood; his profane ſacrifices for the ſins of the dead and the quick; his cannonization of men; calling upon angels or ſaints departed; worſhipping of imagery relics and croſſes; dedicating of churches, altars, days; vows to creatures: his purgatory, prayers for the dead; prayers or ſpeaking in a ſtrange language; with his proceſſions and blaſphemous litany, and multitudes of advocates or mediators: his manifold orders, auricular confeſſions: his deſperate and uncertain repentance; his general and doubtſome faith; his ſatisfactions of men for their ſins; his juſtification by works, *Opus Operatum*, works of ſuperorogation, merits, pardons, peregrinations, and ſtations: his holy water, baptizing of bells, conjuring of ſpirits, croſſing, ſaying, anointing, conjuring, hallowing of God's good creatures, with the ſuperſtitious opinion joined therewith: his worldly monarchy, and wicked hierarchy: his three ſolemn vows, with all his ſhavellings of ſundry ſorts: his erroneous and bloody decree made at Trent, with all the ſubſcribers or approvers of that cruel and bloody band, conjured againſt the church of God. And finally, we deteſt all his vain allegories, rites, ſigns and traditions brought in the church without or againſt the word of God, and doctrine of this true reformed church; to the which we join ourſelves willingly, in doctrine, faith, religion, diſcipline, and uſe of the holy ſacraments, as lively members of the ſame in Chriſt our head; promiſing and ſwearing by the name of the LORD OUR GOD. That we ſhall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and diſcipline of this church, and ſhall defend the ſame according to our vocation and power, all the days of our lives; under the pains contained in the law, and danger both

of

of body and ſoul in the day of God's fearful judgment.

And ſeeing that many are ſtirred up by Satan and that Roman Antichriſt to promiſe, ſwear, ſubſcribe, and for a time uſe the holy ſacraments in the church deceitfully, againſt their own conſciences; minding thereby, firſt, under the external cloke of religion, to corrupt and ſubvert ſecretly God's true religion within the church; and afterwards when time may ſerve, to become open enemies and perſecutors of the ſame, under vain hope of the pope's diſpenſation, deviſed againſt the word of God, to his greater confuſion, and their double condemnation in the day of the Lord Jeſus; we therefore, willing to take away all ſuſpicion of hypocriſy, and of ſuch double dealing with God and his church, proteſt, and call the ſearcher of all hearts for witneſs, that our minds and hearts do fully agree with this our confeſſion, promiſe, oath and ſubſcription, ſo that we are not moved with any worldly reſpect, but are perſuaded only in our conſcience, through the knowledge and love of God's true religion, imprinted in our hearts by the holy Spirit, as we ſhall anſwer to him in the day when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be diſcloſed.

And becauſe we perceive, that the quietneſs and ſtability of our religion and church, doth depend upon the ſafety and good behaviour of the king's majeſty, as upon a comfortable inſtrument of God's mercy granted to this country, for the maintaining of this church and miniſtration of juſtice among us: we proteſt and promiſe with our hearts, under the ſame oath, hand write, and pains, that we ſhall defend his perſon and authority with our goods, bodies and lives, in the defence of Chriſt his evangel, liberties of our country, miniſtration of juſtice, and puniſhment of iniquity, againſt all enemies within this realm or without, as we deſire our God to be a ſtrong and merciful defender to us in the day of our death, and coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory eternally. Amen.

THE

THE

Solemn League and Covenant,

FOR

Reformation and defence of religion, the honour and happineſs of the king and the peace and ſafety of the three kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland; agreed upon by commiſſioners from the parliament, and aſſembly of divines in England, with commiſſioners of the convention of eſtates and general aſſembly in Scotland; approven by the general aſſembly of the church of Scotland, and by both houſes of parliament and aſſembly of divines in England, and taken and ſubſcribed by them, *Anno* 1643, and thereafter by the ſame authority, taken and ſubſcribed by all ranks in Scotland and England, the ſame year: and ratified by the act of parliament of Scotland, *Anno* 1644, and again renewed in Scotland, with an acknowledgment of ſins and engagements to duties by all ranks *Anno* 1648, and by the parliament 1649; and taken and ſubſcribed by king Charles II. at Spey June 23. 1649; and at Scoon, January 1. 1650.

WE noblemen, barons, knights, gentlemen, citizens, burgeſſes, miniſters of the goſpel, and commons of all ſorts in the kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, by the providence of GOD, living under one king and being of one reformed religion, having before our eyes the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, the honour and happineſs of the king's majeſty, and his poſterity, and the true public liberty, ſafety and peace of the kingdoms, wherein every one's private condition is included: and calling to mind the treacherous and bloody plots, conſpiracies, attempts, and practices of the enemies of GOD, againſt the true religion, and profeſſors thereof in all places eſpecially in theſe three kingdoms, ever ſince the reformation of religion; and how much their rage, power and preſumption

are of late, and at this time increaſed and exerciſed where-of the deplorable ſtate of the church and kingdom of Ireland, the diſtreſſed eſtate of the church and kingdom of England, and the dangerous eſtate of the church and kingdom of Scotland, are preſent and public teſtimonies; we have now at laſt (after other means of ſupplication remonſtrance proteſtations and ſufferings for the preſervation of ourſelves and our religion, from utter ruin and deſtruction, according to the commendable practice of theſe kingdoms in former times, and the example of God's people in other nations: After mature deliberation, reſolved and determined to enter into a mutual and ſolemn league and covenant, wherein we all ſubſcribe, and each one of us, for himſelf with our hands lifted up to the moſt High GOD, do ſwear,

I. THAT we ſhall ſincerely, really, and conſtantly, thro' the grace of God, endeavour, in our ſeveral places and callings, the preſervation, of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government, againſt our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government, according to the word of GOD, and the example of the beſt reformed churches; and ſhall endeavour to bring the churches of GOD, in the three kingdoms, to the neareſt conjunction and uniformity in religion, confeſſion of faith, form of church government, directory for worſhip and catechiſing; that we, and our poſterity after us, may, as brethren live in faith and love: and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midſt of us.

II. That we ſhall in like manner, without reſpect of perſons, endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, (that is, church government by arch biſhops, biſhops, their chancellors and commiſſaries, deans, deans and chapters, arch deacons, and all other eccleſiaſtical officers depending on that hierarchy) ſuperſtition, hereſy, ſchiſm, profaneneſs, and whatſoever ſhall be found to be contrary to ſound doctrine, and the power of godlineſs; leſt we partake in other men's ſins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their

their plagues; and that the Lord may be one, and his name one in the three kingdoms.

III. We ſhall with the ſame ſincerity, reality, and conſtancy, in our ſeveral vocations, endeavour, with our eſtates and lives, mutually to preſerve the rights and privileges of the parliament, and the liberties of the kingdoms; and to preſerve and defend the king's majeſty's perſon and authority, in the preſervation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms; that the world may bear witneſs; with our conſciences of our loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminiſh his majeſty's juſt power and greatneſs.

IV. We ſhall alſo, with all faithfulneſs, endeavour the diſcovery of all ſuch as has been, or ſhall be incendiaries, malignants or evil inſtruments, by hindering the reformation of religion, dividing the king from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any faction, or parties among the people contrary to this league and covenant; that they may be brought to the public trial, and receive condign puniſhment, as the degree of their offences ſhall require or deſerve: or the ſupreme judicatories of both kingdoms reſpectively, or others having power from them for that effect, ſhall judge convenient.

V. And whereas the happineſs of a bleſſed peace between theſe kingdoms, denied in former times to our progenitors, is by the good providence of God, granted unto us, and hath been lately concluded and ſettled by both parliaments: we ſhall each one of us, according to our place and intereſt, endeavour that they may remain conjoined in a firm peace and union to all poſterity; and that juſtice may be done upon the wilful oppoſers thereof, in mannner expreſſed in the precedent article.

VI. We ſhall alſo according to our places and callings in this common cauſe of religion, liberty and peace of the kingdoms, aſſiſt and defend all thoſe that enter into this league and covenant in the maintaining and purſuing thereof: and ſhall not ſuffer ourſelves, directly or indirectly, by whatſoever combination, perſuaſion or terror to be divided and withdrawn from this bleſſed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give ourſelves to a deteſtable indifferency, or neutrality

in this cauſe, which ſo much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the kingdoms, and honour of the king; but ſhall all the days of our lives, zealouſly and conſtantly continue therein, againſt all oppoſition and promote the ſame according to our power, againſt all lets and impediments whatſoever; and, what we are not able ourſelves to ſuppreſs or overcome, we ſhall reveal and make known that it may be timely prevented or removed: all which we ſhall do as in the ſight of God.

And, becauſe theſe kingdoms are guilty of many ſins, and provocations againſt God, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, as is too manifeſt by our preſent diſtreſſes and dangers, the fruits thereof; we profeſs and declare before GOD and the world, our unfeigned deſire to be humbled for our own ſins, and for the ſins of theſe kingdoms; eſpecially that we have not, as we ought, valued the ineſtimable benefit of the goſpel, that we have not laboured for the purity and power thereof, and that we have not endeavoured to receive Chriſt in our hearts, nor to walk worthy of him in our lives; which are the cauſes of other ſins and tranſgreſſions, ſo much abounding among us, and our true and unfeigned purpoſe, deſire, and endeavour, for ourſelves, and all others under our power and charge, both in public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in the example of a real reformation; that the Lord may turn away his wrath and heavy indignation, and eſtabliſh theſe churches and kingdoms in truth and peace. And this covenant we take in the preſence of ALMIGHTY GOD, the ſearcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the ſame, as we ſhall anſwer at that great day, when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be diſcloſed: moſt humbly beſeeching the Lord, to ſtrengthen us by his holy Spirit for this end, and to bleſs our deſires and proceedings with ſuch ſucceſs, as may be deliverance and ſafety to his people, and encouragement to other Chriſtian churches, groaning under, or in danger of the yoke of Antichriſtian tyranny, to join in the ſame, or like aſſociation and covenant; to the glory of GOD, the enlargement of the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, and the peace and tranquility of Chriſtian kingdoms and common wealths.

ACT

ACT

OF THE

Associate Presbytery;

For Renewing the

NATIONAL COVENANT of SCOTLAND, and the SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT of the three NATIONS, in a way and manner agreeable to our present situation and circumstances in this period.

At Stirling, the twentieth and third day of December one thousand seven hundred and forty three years.

THE which day and place, the ministers and elders associate together, being met in presbytery; and taking under their serious consideration how the Lord was graciously pleased to visit this nation with the light of the glorious gospel, not only in great purity, but also with remarkable power and efficacy, when Antichristian darkness had overspread the whole land; and that when together with the nations about, we were groaning under the yoke of popish tyranny, idolatry and superstition, even then the Lord did, by his outstretched arm, deliver our fathers from the bondage that they were under to Rome Antichristian, and reared up a tabernacle for himself among us, according to the pattern shewn in the mount of divine revelation; a pure system of truths, laid down from the word of God in our first Confession of Faith, directed mainly

mainly againſt the errors and abominations of the church of Rome the great point upon which the teſtimony of the Lord's witneſſes was then ſtated, was received, embraced and confeſſed, by all ranks of perſons in this land; and in like manner, the worſhip of God was purged from the abominable idolatries, the groſs corruption and ſuperſtition of the church of Rome; and the government and diſcipline of the houſe of God was eſtabliſhed, according to the divine pattern, in the due ſubordination of congregational elderſhips to preſbyteries, of preſbyteries to ſynods, and of ſynods to general aſſemblies: the preſbytery further conſidering, that all ranks of perſons within this land, have ſundrytimes bound themſelves and poſterity, both by a Solemn NATIONAL Oath and COVENANT, [to abide in the faith, profeſſion and obedience of the foreſaid true reformed religion, in doctrine, worſhip, government and diſcipline, in oppoſition to the corrupt doctrines, the groſs idolatry and ſuperſtition of the church of Rome, and whatſoever elſe is contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of Godlineſs:] and that afterwards, by the good hand of God upon them, all the three nations were brought to join themſelves to the Lord, and to one another, in a SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT (for the preſervation of the foreſaid reformed religion in the church of Scotland in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government, for the reformation of religion, in England and Ireland, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the beſt reformed churches; and for bringing the churches of Chriſt in the three kingdoms, to the neareſt conjunction of uniformity, in religion, Confeſſion of Faith, form of church government, directory for worſhip and catechizing; that they, and their poſterity after them, might as brethren, live in faith and love; and that the Lord might delight to dwell in the midſt of us, and that the Lord might be one, and his name one in three kingdoms;) by which oaths and covenants, all the three nations, and this nation in a ſpecial manner, ſurrendered themſelves to the Lord Jeſus, and ſwore fealty and allegiance unto him as the only king over Zion the hill of his holineſs, and as the only Lord and law-

giver

giver unto and over the church, his own ſpiritual free and independent kingdom; and thereby many ſcripture prophecies and promiſes were in part accompliſhed, ſuch as Iſa. lv. 5. 'Behold, thou ſhalt call a nation that thou know-'eſt not, and nations that knew not thee ſhall run unto 'thee, Iſa. xlii. 4.——And the iſles ſhall wait for his law, 'Zech. ii. 11. And many nations ſhall be joined to the Lord 'in that day, and ſhall be my people; Micah iv. 2. And 'many nations ſhall come and ſay, come and let us go up 'to the mountain of the Lord and to the houſe of the God 'of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will 'walk in his paths; Rev. xi. 15. And the ſeventh angel 'ſounded, and there were great voices in heaven, ſaying, 'the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of 'our Lord and of his Chriſt. The preſbytery farther conſidering, that all the three nations, and particularly this whole church and land, have burſt the Lord's bands aſunder and caſt away his cords from them, having dealt perfidiouſly and treacherouſly in the foreſaid ſolemn oaths and covenants; and that though they have had many loud calls, both by word and providence, to return to the Lord, yet they have held faſt deceit, and refuſed to return; alſo conſidering that the foreſaid oaths and covenants are of perpetual and indiſpenſible obligation, and that it is the duty particularly of all ſorts of perſons in this land, to return to the Lord, by taking hold of his covenant of grace, which ſtands faſt with Chriſt our glorious new covenant head; and in the faith of this his covenant, and the grace and ſtrength therein promiſed, caſting away all our tranſgreſſions and idols devoting ourſelves unto the Lord in a covenant of duty and ſwearing unto him: and, in regard, that as a public confeſſing and acknowledging and avouching of the Lord to be our God, is a religious duty required in the firſt commandment of the moral law; ſo it has been the frequent practice of the church and people of God, eſpecially after groſs backſliding and defection from him, as 2 Chron. xv. 10.—16. 'So they gathered themſelves 'together at Jeruſalem in the third month, in the fifteenth 'year of the reign of Aſa, and they offered unto the Lord 'the ſame time, of the ſpoil which they had brought, 'ſeven hundred oxen, and ſeven thouſand ſheep: and they

entred

'entred into a covenant to ſeek the Lord God of their 'Fathers, with all their hearts, and with all their ſoul; 'that whoſoever would not ſeek the Lord God of Iſrael, 'ſhould be put to death, whether ſmall or great, whether 'man or woman; and they ſware unto the Lord with a 'loud voice, and with ſhouting and with trumpets, and 'with cornets; and all Judah rejoiced at the oath; for 'they had ſworn with all their heart and ſought him with 'their whole deſire, and he was found of them, and the 'Lord gave them reſt round about, chap. xxii. 16. And 'Jehoiada made a covenant between him and between all 'the people, and between the king, that they ſhould be 'the Lord's people: chap. xxix. 10. Now it is in mine 'heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Iſrael, 'that his fierce wrath may turn away from us;' and chap. xxiv. 31. 'And the king ſtood in his place, and made a 'covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and 'to keep his commandments, and his teſtimonies and his 'ſtatutes, with all his heart, and with all his ſoul, to per- 'form the words of the covenant which are written in this 'book, 2 Cor. v. 5. They firſt gave their ownſelves to the 'Lord, and unto us by the will of God;' and this is pro- miſed to take place in the New Teſtament days, Rom. ix. 25. 'I will call them my people, which were not my 'people, and her beloved, which was not beloved;' com- pared with Zech. xiii, 9.——'I will ſay it is my people, 'and they ſhall ſay, the Lord is my God,' Iſa. xliv. 3, 4, 5. 'For I will pour water on him that is thirſty, and 'floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon 'thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine offspring, and they 'ſhall ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water 'courſes; one ſhall ſay I am the Lord's, and another ſhall 'call himſelf by the name of Jacob, and another ſhall ſub- 'ſcribe with his hand unto the Lord, and ſirname himſelf 'by the name of Iſrael.' Rev. xi. 15 'The kingdoms of 'this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and 'of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever;' and that the ſame duty has been often practiſed by this church and land, and found a ſpecial mean, through the Lord's bleſſing, of a reviving unto them out of their bondage; and likewiſe, in regard this is a duty enjoined with the greateſt

greateſt ſolemnity, Iſa. xlv. 23. 'I have ſworn by myſelf 'the word is gone out of my mouth, in righteouſneſs, and 'ſhall not return, that unto me, every knee ſhall bow, e-'very tongue ſhall ſwear:' as alſo in regard all ſuch as deſire to be found faithful to the Lord, and to cleave unto him, ought publicly to confeſs, acknowledge, and avouch the Lord and his truths, though they ſhould be the ſmaller part, and though the bulk and body of a nation and people ſhould either through wickedneſs and enmity, or thro' blind prejudices, or through negligence and ſlothfulneſs, refuſe to concur and join in ſuch an important and ſolemn duty; as the prophecy ſeems plainly to point out to us, Iſa. xix 18. 'In that day ſhall five cities in the Land of 'Egypt, ſpeak the language of Canaan and ſwear to the 'Lord of hoſts.'

Therefore, and for all the above weighty grounds, reaſons and conſiderations, this preſbytery in obedience to the command of God, conform to the practice of the church and people of God, recorded in ſcripture, and according to the laudable example of their religious progenitors in reforming times, do judge it their duty to call and beſeech; likeas, they hereby do, CALL, OBTEST, and BESEECH, all ſort of perſons in this land, into whoſe hands this their preſent act and deed may come; and more particularly, all ſuch as have acceded to this preſbytery; to humble themſelves under the mighty hand of God on account of our iniquities both perſonal and national; to flee, by faith to the atoning blood of the Lamb of God for the expiation and remiſſion of them; and to look upon him whom we have pierced and mourn bitterly for the manifold diſhonours and indignities that we have done him; and to turn from them unto the Lord our God with hearty grief for and hatred of them; and with our hearts and ſouls, to renew our ſolemn vows and covenant engagements unto the moſt high God. Jer. l. 5. 'Come and let 'us join ourſelves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that 'ſhall not be forgotten.' Hoſ. vi. 1. 'Come and let us 'return unto the Lord: for he hath torn and he will heal 'us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up.' 2 Chron. xxx. 8. 'Now be ye not ſtiff-necked as your fathers were, 'but yield yourſelves unto the Lord, and enter into his

'ſanctuary, which he hath ſanctified for ever. And ſerve 'the Lord your God, that the fierceneſs of his wrath may 'turn away from you'

The preſbytery in like manner, calling to their remembrance, and ſeriouſly conſidering that when the national covenant was renewed in Scotland, it was accommodated to the circumſtances of the church and land, at the ſeveral times of the renovation of the ſame: as for inſtance, in the year 1590, it was renewed with a general bond adapted to their circumſtances at that time; likewiſe in the year 1596 a year remarkable for ſolemn covenanting in this land accompanied with the Lord's ſpecial countenance and preſence, firſt in the general aſſembly which met that year, afterwards in ſynods and preſbyteries, and through moſt of the particular congregations; for, though the national covenant was not ſworn, at this time, in the expreſs terms in which it was before received; yet it was, upon the matter, ſworn by the miniſters of this church, in the particular acknowledgment which they made of the ſins and corruptions of the miniſtry, and in their engagement to the duties of their office and calling; and likewiſe, by the ſeveral congregations thro' the land, in the engagements they came under, agreeable to their ſituation and circumſtances at that time: in like manner, in the year 1638, our national confeſſion and covenant was ſworn and ſubſcribed in a bond ſubjoined thereunto, whereby it was accommodated to their circumſtances and ſituation the ſaid year: afterwards when the aſſembly that met at Glaſgow the ſame year found and declared, that the five articles of Perth, the government of the church by biſhops, and the civil places and power of churchmen, were all contrary to our confeſſion and covenant; it was again ſubſcribed in the year 1639, according to the foreſaid determination of that aſſembly; likewiſe, the ſolemn league and covenant which was at firſt ſworn through the three nations and particularly by all ranks of perſons in this land, in the year 1643, when it was afterwards renewed in Scotland, in the year 1648, it was ſworn and ſubſcribed with a ſolemn acknowledgment of the breaches thereof, and with an engagement to the duties contained therein; which is alſo agreeable to ſcripture pattern and example, as Ezra, chap. ix.

ix. and x. and Nehemiah chap. ix and x. where the church and people of God, after a particular acknowledgement of their own ſins and the ſins of their fathers engaged themſelves againſt the particular evils and ſins that prevailed among them, and to the duties incumbent upon them in their ſituation and circumſtances at that time; therefore conform to the above ſcripture examples, and agreeably to the above mentioned laudable precedents in our own church and land, this preſbytery agree and reſolve, that the NATIONAL COVENANT of Scotland and the SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT of the three nations, ſhall be renewed and ſworn in a MANNER ſuitable to the preſent CIRCUMSTANCES and SITUATION of this church and land, by all ſuch as ſhall willingly offer themſelves unto the Lord, in this ſolemn work and duty; and for this end, they appoint that both covenants ſhall be renewed in a ſolemn acknowledgment of the public breaches of the ſame, and in a ſolemn profeſſion of our faith, and engagement unto the duties contained in them. The tenor whereof follows.

WE ALL AND EVERY ONE OF US, ſeriouſly conſidering the great goodneſs of God manifeſted towards this land, in bringing our fathers, firſt out of Pagan darkneſs, and afterwards when Antichriſtian idolatry and ſuperſtition had overſpread the whole land, in making the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt break forth with ſuch remarkable purity and power that the thick clouds of Popiſh darkneſs were ſcattered, and the houſe of God was reared up among us, in a great meaſure of conformity to the pattern laid down in the Lord's word; as alſo, that all ranks of perſons within this land, did, by a national confeſſion, oath, and covenant, adjure particularly and expreſly the errors and corruptions of Popery; and that by the ſaid oath and covenant, they did ſundry times bind and oblige both themſelves and their poſterity to continue in the profeſſion faith and obedience, of the true reformed religion, as the ſame was held forth from the word of God, in our firſt Confeſſion of Faith and books of diſcipline; and to defend the ſame and reſiſt all contrary errors and corruptions according to their vocation, all the days of their life: and likewiſe, conſidering that all ranks of perſons in

the three kingdoms, did by a ſolemn league and covenant, ſwear, each one of them for himſelf, that they ſhould ſincerely, really, and conſtantly through the grace of God, endeavour in their ſeveral places and callings, the preſervation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the beſt reformed churches; and that they ſhould endeavour to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms, to the neareſt conjunction and uniformity in religion, Confeſſion of Faith, form of church government, directory for worſhip and catechiſing, that they and their poſterity after them, might as brethren, live in faith and love, and that the Lord might delight to dwell in the midſt of us; as likewiſe, by the ſaid covenant, every one bound and obliged themſelves to perſonal reformation, ſo that in their ſeveral places and callings, they might endeavour national reformation; and in purſuance of the above covenanted uniformity, the aſſembly that met at Weſtminſter, with commiſſioners from the church of Scotland, agreed upon by a Confeſſion of Faith, larger and ſhorter catechiſms, the form of preſbyterial church government, and ordination of miniſters, with a directory for the public worſhip of God; all which were received and approven by the general aſſemblies of this church, in the manner expreſſed in the ſeveral acts adopting the ſame; and they held forth unto us, from the word of God, the ſame true reformed religion, in doctrine, worſhip, order, and government, which had been, from our reformation from Popery, believed and practiſed in this church and land, and ſworn to in our national covenant: and farther, conſidering that all ranks of perſons, both in former and preſent times, have treacherouſly departed from the Lord, and have tranſgreſſed his laws, changed his ordinances, and broken his covenant; and that at this time, we are under many heavy ſpiritual plagues, which are the ordinary forerunners of deſolating ſtrokes and judgments, both upon churches and nations:

Therefore being warranted by the word of God and the example

example of the church and people of God in ſcripture, and remembring the practice of our religious predeceſſors, who have acknowledged before the Lord their departure from him, by unbelief and manifold breaches of their ſolemn national engagements and covenants, and have engaged themſelves to reformation; and perceiving that this duty, when gone about in the faith of God's promiſe, and in obedience to his command, hath been attended with a receiving out of bondage, and with a bleſſing and ſucceſs from heaven; WE DESIRE, in dependence upon the LORD JESUS who is exalted a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins to ACKNOWLEDGE; and in the faith of his atoning blood, and in the ſtrength of the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, WE CONFESS AND ACKNOWLEDGE, as in his ſight, who is the ſearcher of hearts, our own tranſgreſſions, and the tranſgreſſions of this church and land.

We with our FATHERS have ſinned, we have done wickedly, our kings, our princes, our nobles, our judges, our magiſtrates our miniſters and people of all ſorts. Though the Lord hath ſpoken long and clearly unto us in the word of the goſpel, we have not hearkened to his voice; though we have made ſome profeſſion of Chriſt, yet we have not, as we ought, received him in our hearts, nor walked worthy of him in our lives; and in this particular inſtance, we have in a very eminent manner, tranſgreſſed the covenant of the Lord our God. Our own conſciences within us, and the many ſpiritual judgments, that we are under, may convince us of our manifold, wilful, and renewed breaches of our ſolemn oaths and covenants.

Particularly, though the ſinfulneſs of receiving into our boſom, and admitting into places of power and truſt, ſuch as were oppoſers of, and enemies to a covenanted work of reformation, was ſolemnly acknowledged in the year 1749, and reformation in this particular was ſworn into; yet, in a ſhort time thereafter, in conſequence of the public reſolutions, places of power and truſt were filled with ſuch; and they were ſuddenly received into full church-communion and fellowſhip. And our backſlidings did increaſe from time to time, till that general apoſtacy and

deſection

defection, when Charles II. being reſtored to the government, all the legal ſecurities given to a covenanted reformation betwixt the years 1638 and 1650, were pull'd down, all the ſeveral parliaments that met during this period together with all their acts and proceedings in favours of reformation, were declared null and void: in like manner, the presbyterial order and government of the houſe of God, to the maintenance and preſervation of which the whole land was ſolemnly ſworn, was overthrown; and prelacy which had been abjured by our covenants was ſet up in its place, and likewiſe, that famous aſſembly which met at Glaſgow in the year 1638, was declared by the parliament to be an unlawful and ſeditious meeting; and all that was done between the foreſaid year and in the year 1651, in proſecution of a covenanted reformation, was declared rebellious and treaſonable; and the national covenant as ſworn in the year 1638, together with the ſolemn league and covenant, were declared to be unlawful oaths, and not binding on the lands; yea, ſuch was the height of wickedneſs that they were ignominiouſly burnt in ſome conſiderable places of the nation: as alſo, moſt ſinful and wicked invaſions were made upon the headſhip and ſovereignty of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the alone king and head of his church; by ſeveral parliamentary acts and deeds aſſerting the king's ſupremacy in all cauſes whatſoever, and declaring that the ordering and diſpoſal of the external government and policy of the church, doth properly belong to the king, as an inherent right of the crown. And when prelacy was thus reared up, as the moſt part of the miniſtry made a ſinful and ſhameful defection unto it, ſo the bulk and body of the land, in contradiction to our ſolemn oaths, and covenants, did ſubmit unto the ſame, Likewiſe, in this day of apoſtaſy and defection, ſuch of the miniſtry as complied not with prelacy did upon the privy council's proclamations, deſert their ſynodical and presbyterial meetings, whence no judicial teſtimony was lifted up againſt the courſe of defection: yea, the moſt part of them left their own flocks, which thereby became a prey to the grievous wolves that were afterwards thruſt in upon them.

Moreover, during this period of heinous backſliding, many

many ſinful oaths, declarations and bonds, were impoſed and among others, the oath of allegiance or rather ſupremacy, with the inſtrument aſſertory of the royal prerogative; the declaration, aud that ſelf contradictory oath the teſt: by which oaths and bonds, the uſurped ſupremacy over the houſe of God was acknowledged and recognized, and a covenant reformation was renounced and abjured; ſo that all ranks of perſons in this land made themſelves more and more vile, by the blackeſt perjury, and the greateſt apoſtaſy from the Lord. And, as if all this had not been enough, ſuch as endeavoured to witneſs againſt that courſe of grievous backſliding, and who departed from evil, became a prey to the greateſt tyranny and cruelty, even to impriſonment, baniſhment ſpoiling of their goods and cruel tortures; yea, the blood of the witneſſes for a covenanted reformation, was ſhed in our principal cities under colour of law, and likewiſe in the high places of the fields, without any legal proceſs againſt them; therefore, in our ſkirts is to be found the blood of thoſe who have ſuffered for the teſtimony of Jeſus, which is crying to heaven for vengeance againſt us to this very day.

Alſo, in conſequence of the abovementioned uſurped ſupremacy over the kingdom of Chriſt, in the year 1669 and 1672, indulgences to ſome miniſters who had conformed to prelacy, were granted, under certain conditions, limitations and reſtrictions; wherefore as the indulgences had their riſe, ſubſiſtence and conveyance from the above wicked ſupremacy; and as the accepters of them were limited and reſtricted in the exerciſe of their miniſtry; ſo, the acceptance of them was a departure from the word of Chriſt's patience, which his ſervants and people in this land were called to hold faſt, eſpecially in ſuch a day of temptation and trial. Likewiſe when the duke of York, a profeſſed Papiſt, was advanced to the throne, a boundleſs toleration was granted by this popiſh prince, which was plainly deſigned for the introduction of popery and ſlavery, being expreſly conveyed from the king's abſolute power, ſuſpending and diſabling all the penal ſtatutes againſt the papiſt's; and inſtead of a due teſtimony offered againſt the ſame. it was accepted by all the miniſters of the preſbyterial denomination through the land except a few only;

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with an addreſs of thanks for the ſame, by a conſiderable number of the ſaid miniſters, in name of the reſt; whereby we have been ſtill further involved in the heinous guilt of departing more and more from the Lord.

As thus the beautiful order, the pure government and diſcipline of the houſe of the Lord, was overturned, buried and forſaken; ſo, that the apoſtate prelatical church (or party, and generally the whole land) did likewiſe reject Chriſt the chief corner ſtone, in the word of his grace and purity of goſpel truth, for maintaining of which this land was once ſo famous, and whereby, at our reformation, a nation was born at once, and a people brought forth as in one day, inſtead of that purity of goſpel truth, there was a general apoſtacy to Arminian and other anti-evangelic errors, perverting the goſpel of Chriſt.

Tho' the Lord was graciouſly pleaſed, by a very glorious and ſurpriſing appearance for theſe lands in the latter end of the year 1688, to deliver us from the yoke of tyranny and arbitrary government, under which we then groaned; yet, we have never, to this day rendred unto him according to the benefits which we have received from him. We did not underſtand his wonderful works, neither remembred the multitude of his mercies. We provoked him at the ſea, even at the red ſea; and inſtead of waiting for his counſel, we followed the counſels of fleſh and blood. We turned not unto him with our whole hearts, but feignedly, and our backſlidings have increaſed from time to time, till our apoſtacy and defection, in the preſent age, is come to an height, as to ſome particular inſtances, which was not known in former times.

Though the Lord wrought a great ſalvation for us, the foreſaid year, yet we ſaid not, 'Where is the Lord that 'brought us up out of the land of Egypt?' We returned not unto the Lord by a free and particular confeſſion and acknowledgement of our above, and many other ſteps of defection and backſliding from him; nor by the renovation of our ſolemn covenant engagements to the moſt high God.

When the eſtates of the nation were met in a free parliament, in the year 1690, our presbyterial church government was ſettled according to its civil eſtabliſhment in the year 1592; and all the ſteps of reformation attained

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to in that covenanting period betwixt 1638 and 1650 were neglected and paſt by, yea, in the ſaid ſettlement of preſbytery, all that was done againſt a covenanted work of reformation; in the firſt ſeſſion of parliament of king Charles, after his reſtoration is left untouched; particularly, the infamous act reſciſſory, whereby all the acts and deeds of the foreſaid covenanting period were declared null and void, is never repealed: alſo, that impious and wicked act, the ſecond act of the ſecond ſeſſion of the ſame parliament, declared null and void, the proceedings of that faithful aſſembly at Glaſgow in the year 1638, and all other acts and deeds of that reforming period, ſtands in the body of our Scots law to this very day: and thus, that great work, which the Lord wrought with an outſtretched arm in the days of our fathers, lies ſtill buried under the grave ſtone of ſeveral parliamentary acts and deeds; which is an iniquity that teſtifies againſt us to this very day. Likewiſe by the ſame parliament, in the year 1690, inſtead of our covenant allegiance, which was judged a proper badge of loyalty in our reforming periods, a general oath of allegiance to the ſovereign was impoſed.

And as in the above and like inſtances, the eſtates of the nation ſhewed no diſpoſition to return to the Lord; ſo, when the firſt general aſſembly of this church did meet, the ſame year 1690, they did not, in their eccleſiaſtical capacity faithfully and particularly repreſent unto all ranks of perſons through the land, their manifold iniquities and backſlidings, in order to excite them to humiliation and mourning before the Lord; they ſat down upon the civil eſtabliſhment, without remonſtrating againſt what was defective in the ſame, or making any expreſs and particular acknowledgement of the many heinous backſlidings of the former period: they did not, by any formal act, condemn the ſacrilegious uſurpation of the royal dignity of *Zion*'s king: nor did they, by an expreſs act, aſſert him to be what he is, The alone king and head of his church, in oppoſition to the above mentioned uſurpation of his royal prerogative, and the indignities done unto the ſame by the many wicked acts and laws that were made, and the ſinful oaths that were impoſed, in that period: neither did they aſſert the divine right of presbytery, nor the intrin-

ſic power of the church, with reſpect to the calling of his national aſſemblies; which two are ſpecial branches of the Redeemer's glorious headſhip in and over his church: likewiſe, they did not expreſly approve our covenanted reformation attained unto from the year 1638, to the year 1650: neither did they plainly juſtify the wreſtlings, teſtimonies and ſufferings of the Lord's remnant for the ſame, in the late perſecuting times: alſo they did not, by any particular act of aſſembly, aſſert the obligation of our covenants, national and ſolemn league, and their binding force upon poſterity: nor did they particularly condemn the above mentioned ſinful oaths, declarations and bonds, and many other ſteps of defection from the Lord, during the foreſaid period: and though the Lord by his ſpecial and remarkable providence, brought the miniſters and elders of this church together again, in a national aſſembly; yet, inſtead of cenſuring ſuch as had made groſs defection from the Lord, ſome were admitted into miniſterial communion, and many into the office of elders, and multitudes into full communion with the church in her ſealing ordinances, who had taken the above mentioned oaths and bonds, and who were deeply involved in the guilt of perſecuting the Lord's people, and in the other defections of that period of apoſtaſy: without requiring from them any evidence of their repentance, and ſorrow for the ſame.

Thus though the Lord did wonderfully deliver us, we rendered not unto him according to the mercies received, but mingled ourſelves with our enemies, and have learned of them their ways, and they have been a dead weight, upon the Lord's work and intereſt ever ſince that time.

Our iniquities and backſlidings have increaſed more and more: particularly, when, by the treaty of union with England, in the year 1707, we were incorporated with our neighbours in England, upon terms oppoſite unto, and inconſiſtent with our covenant union with them; in regard the maintenance of the hierarchy and ceremonies of the church of England is made, by the ſaid treaty, a fundamental and eſſential article of the union of the two kingdoms: and thus, with our own conſent, the antichriſtian hierarchy, and a ſuperſtitious worſhip in England, having

having all the ſecurity that human laws can give them, whereby the whole nation have again not only given openly up with their ſolemn covenant engagements to the Lord, but alſo involved themſelves in the guilt of conſenting to, and thereby approving of the Antichriſtian hiearchy, and ſuperſtitious worſhip in England.

Immediately after the foreſaid incorporating union, our land was made to groan under the load of unneceſſary ſwearing, in the manifold repetition of oaths; ſuch as the oath of abjuration, impoſed upon all in civil and military truſt, and afterwards upon the miniſters of the church of Scotland; which oath we acknowledge as one of our national ſins, and ſteps of defection, in ſo far as the united conſtitution, oppoſite unto our covenant union, is thereby homologated and approven. Likewiſe the ſacramental teſt is impoſed upon the members of this church, while ſerving the ſovereign in England and Ireland; alſo a ſuperſtitious form of ſwearing is introduced amongſt us, by laying the hands upon, and kiſſing the goſpels; moreover the ſame oaths are frequently repeated upon the ſame day, to qualify men for different poſts and offices, whereby the weight and impreſſion of a ſolemn oath is ready to wear off the ſpirits of many. And, by all theſe ſinful impoſitions and practices, our land is more and more involved in ſin and guilt.

Further, a ſhort time after the above incorporating union, particularly in the year, 1712, an almoſt boundleſs toleration was granted, whereby a door was opened to groſs corruption in principle, which always brings along with it looſeneſs in practice; and in conſequence of this toleration, the ſuperſtitious and corrupt worſhip of the church of England is ſet up in all the corners of this land. Alſo, in the foreſaid year, the right of preſentation to vacant churches, claimed by patrons, was again reſtored unto them; and though patronage is contrary to our received and known principles, yet countenance is given to this antichriſtian uſurpation, by the judicatories their intruding preſentees upon reclaiming congregations. Likewiſe, the ſuperſtitious obſervation of holy days is introduced amongſt us, by the vacation of our moſt conſiderable courts

of juſtice in the latter end of December. By all which ſinful courſes and practices, our land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they have tranſgreſſed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlaſting covenant.

As our provocations in the above inſtances are great, ſo they have increaſed, and are ſtill more grievous, through the deep wounds that have been given to many precious and important truths, laid down from the word of God in our Confeſſion of faith: particularly, it has been vented and taught among us, That nothing is to be admitted in religion but what is agreeable to reaſon, and determined by reaſon to be ſo: that there are means appointed of God for obtaining ſaving grace; which means, when diligently uſed, with ſerioufneſs, ſincerity, and faith of being heard, God hath promiſed to bleſs with ſucceſs; and, that the going about theſe means in the foreſaid mannner, is not above the reach of our natural powers and abilities: that were it not for the proſpect of happineſs, we could not, and therefore would not ſerve God; that, by the light of nature, and works of creation and providence, including tradition, and God hath given an obſcure objective revelation unto all men, of his being reconcileable to ſinners: that it is probable that none are excluded from the benefits of the remedy for ſin, provided by God, except theſe, who by their actual ſins, exclude themſelves, and ſlight or reject either the clearer light of the goſpel, revealed to the church, or that obſcure diſcovery and offer of grace made to all without the church: as alſo, That there was not a proper covenant made with Adam, for himſelf and his poſterity, and that Adam was not a federal head to his poſterity.

Though the above groſs and dangerous errors, whereby many important truths, laid down from the word of God in our Confeſſion of faith, are ſubverted; were all taught in one of our univerſities; and though they were brought before the judicatories of this church; and likewiſe, tho' the teacher of them owned and maintained them in his defences at their bar: yet the general aſſembly, in the year 1717, diſmiſſed the proceſs without any cenſure inflicted upon the ſaid teacher; yea, without any particular expreſs teſtimony againſt the above groſs and dangerous errors. And ſo, as a righteous judgment upon this church,

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for neglecting to vindicate injured truth, and to cenſure the broacher of the above errors, the Lord permitted him to proceed from evil to worſe, even the length of impugning the Deity of the great God our Saviour; as appears from the proceſs againſt him in the years 1727 and 1728, For it was found evidently proven by the aſſemblies which met the ſaid years, That he had vented and taught, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is not neceſſarily exiſtent: that the neceſſary exiſtence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is a thing we know not. That the three perſons of the Trinity are not to be ſaid to be numerically one in ſubſtance or eſſence; as alſo, That the terms neceſſary exiſtence, ſupreme Deity, and the title of the only true God, may be taken in a ſenſe that includes the perſonal property of the Father, and ſo not belonging to the Son By which propoſitions, the Son of God our Redeemer, and the Holy Ghoſt, our ſanctifier, have been robbed of their true Deity, and conſequently of their eſſential glory.

Through the above mentioned groſs and dangerous propoſitions, this land has been the ſeat of pernicious errors, and of grievous blaſphemy againſt the perſons of the adorable Trinity. But though it is to be feared, that the ſeed of error which hath been thus ſown among us, has taken deep root, and is bringing forth corrupt and poiſonous fruits; yet, as the judicatories of this church have never inflicted any cenſure upon the teacher of the above errors, adequate to the great ſcandal and offence he had given: ſo they have not to this very day, particularly and expreſly condemned any of the above mentioned errors, as contrary to the doctrine held forth from the word of God in our Confeſſion of Faith: nor have they aſſerted the truth in oppoſition unto the terms in which it has been impugned and denied: and thus, many important and precious truths have been left wounding and bleeding, without any ſuitable teſtimony given unto them.

Likewiſe, ſeveral other groſs and dangerous errors have been vented among us; even ſuch whereby the peculiar and ſupernatural operations of the holy Spirit have been traduced, and ſpiritual exerciſe expoſed and ridiculed; and ſuch whereby the peculiar doctrines of the goſpel, concerning the perſon and mediation of Chriſt are wicked-

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ly ſubverted, and though ſeveral ſuch errors have been brought to the bar of the preſent judicatories; yet neither is the author thereof cenſured, nor is there any expreſs judicial teſtimony given againſt him. Moreover, it has been publicly aſſerted and maintained by him, that the ſole and univerſal motive to virtuous actions, is ſelf-love, intereſt or pleaſure; whereby ſelf is exalted unto the throne of God; and yet the aſſembly, in the year 1736, not only diſmiſſed the publiſher of this and ſeveral ſuch groſs errors, without any cenſure inflicted upon him, or any condemnation of his errors; but inſtead of this, the aſſembly admitted his explication of the article concerning ſelf love, namely, that our delight in the honour and glory of God, is the chief motive of all virtuous and religious actions; whereby it appears, that the foreſaid aſſembly have adopted the above erroneous principle concerning ſelf love, as their own; in regard that the maintainer thereof does, by the above explication, ſtill make our delight (and ſo our ſelf love, intereſt or pleaſure) the chief motive of all virtuous and religious actions; ſo that hereby the great idol ſelf is ſtill exalted placed in the throne of God, and the declarative glory of God is ſtill ſubordinated unto ſelf, as our chief and higheſt end.

Our iniquities and backſlidings have alſo increaſed by the conduct of the preſent judicatories, in their exerciſing a lordly power and authority over the heritage of God, and by their groſs perverting of the ordinance of diſcipline. Thus, violence has been done to the flock and heritage of God by obtruding miniſters upon them in all corners of the land; and by exerciſing a legiſlative power and authority over the houſe of God, in making laws to his ſubjects contrary to his will declared in his word; as was done by the general aſſembly in the year 1732, in their act anent the ſettlement of vacant pariſhes; and though this act was repealed by the aſſembly, in the year 1734; yet it was not repealed on account of the ſinfulneſs thereof, but only becauſe it was enacted contrary to ſome ordinary forms: accordingly, the contrariety of the ſaid act to the word of God; and laudable conſtitutions of this church agreeable thereto, has never been acknowleged; yea, vacant congregations are, to this day,

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ſettled according to the manner preſcribed in the ſaid repealed act. Likewiſe, the ordinance of diſcipline has been perverted by the aſſembly in the year 1733, in appointing their commiſſion to inflict cenſures upon ſome miniſters merely for proteſting, for their own exoneration, againſt a ſentence of the aſſembly, reſtraining miniſterial freedom, in teſtifying doctrinally againſt a courſe of defection; in caſe the ſaid miniſters ſhould not retract their proteſtation. Moreover, by an act of the ſaid aſſembly, concerning the miniſters of the presbytery of Dunfermline, ſuch as cannot ſubmit to the miniſtry of intruders are excommunicate from ſealing ordinances; and miniſters are threatned with the higheſt cenſures of the church, if they diſpenſe ſealing ordinances unto them: and yet the erroneous are diſmiſſed from the bar of the judicatories, either without any cenſure at all, or with no due cenſure inflicted upon them.

Alſo, of late, the Sabbath of the Lord has been publicly profaned, by the moſt part of miniſters in reading the act of parliament anent captain John Porteous; by which reading of that act, the alone headſhip and ſovereignty of the Lord Jeſus over the church, his free and independant kingdom, was likewiſe practically given up. And ſome of the judicatories having ſcreened the readers of the ſaid act, by their acts of forbearance; and none of the judicatories having cenſured any of them for this public ſcandal and offence; the whole lump of the eſtabliſhed church, thus leavened, by ſuffering the leaven of this unpurged ſcandal to continue among them, may therefore juſtly be conſtructed to have departed from their holding of the king of Zion, and to have ſubjected and ſubordinated their eccleſiaſtical meetings to the civil powers, whereby the Redeemer's crown has been profaned and caſt down to the ground.

Though the judicatories of this national church have been for a conſiderable time, carrying on a courſe of defection; yet they are ſo far from acknowledging their iniquity, and returning to the Lord, that they condemn a teſtimony unto the truth; and they not only refuſe to lift up a judicial teſtimony for truth themſelves, but they perſecute others, who are endeavouring to do it. Particularly,

ticularly, the general aſſembly that met in the year 1738, condemned in bulk the teſtimony emitted by the aſſociate preſbytery, as caſting many groundleſs and calumnious reflections upon the ſaid judicatories, without condeſcending upon any one of theſe which they call groundleſs and calumnious reflections; whereby inſtead of confeſſing their guilt to the glory of God, they juſtify themſelves, and plead that they are innocent, and refuſe that they have ſinned, farther, the ſaid aſſembly impowered their commiſſion to libel and cite the ſeceding mininiſters before the enſuing aſſembly. Likewiſe, the aſſembly in the year 1739, [even in the face of a public and open teſtimony given by the preſbytery; in their Act and Declinature read in preſence of the aſſembly, againſt their courſe of defection and backſliding from the Lord; together with a ſolemn call given them, in the ſaid act and declinature, to return to the Lord, did harden themſelves] yet more in their iniquity, by condemning this teſtimony, as containing nothing but groundleſs prejudices againſt the preſent judicatories, and moſt injurious, inſolent and diſreſpectful expreſſions, concerning the higheſt civil authority; though the declinature contains nothing with reference to civil authority, but a juſt and neceſſary teſtimony againſt the above act of parliment anent captain John Porteous; moreover they recommended it to the next aſſembly, to inflict the cenſure of depoſition upon the ſeceding miniſters; and afterwards, that aſſembly did pretend to do ſo: by which procedure they have heightned and aggravated their iniquity: in regard they have thereby materially ſentenced all ſuch miniſters to depoſition, who ſhall duly teſtify againſt the preſent courſe of defection, which, as matters ſtand, cannot be done in a way of communion with the preſent judicatories. And we deſire to lament over it before the Lord, that the preſent judicatories have come to ſuch a height of defection, that they continue to refuſe all calls which are given them to return to the Lord, from whom we have, every one of us deeply revolted.

It is alſo to be lamented, that a flood of errors hath broke in upon the land: whereby the Lord's name is dreadfully diſhonoured, the doctrine of juſtification by grace

grace is wofully corrupted, the proper imputation of the righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt for our juſtification before God is denied; the foundations of our holy religion overturned, thouſands of precious ſouls deſtroyed, and wide ſteps made towards Popery and paganiſm. More particularly, it is to be lamented, that there is a dreadful prevalency of Deiſm, whereby all revealed religion is rejected, and the light of corrupt nature is exalted in its room: that the ſeed of Arianiſm is ſown among us; whereby the true and ſupreme Deity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Ghoſt, is denied; and thus, the very foundation of the Chriſtian faith is unhinged: as alſo, that there is a general growth of Arminianiſm, whereby it is maintained, that God's act of election and reprobation, depends on his foreſight of the good or evil works of men; that Jeſus Chriſt by his death has merited grace to all mankind; that notwithſtanding of the fall, man retains a freedom of will to that which is ſpiritually good; that the grace of God is not irreſiſtable and efficacious of itſelf; and that believers in Chriſt may fall totally and finally away from a ſtate of grace. And it is farther to be lamented, that, of late ſome who formerly diſtinguiſhed themſelves in zeal for our reformation and covenanted principles, have turned aſide to Latitudinarian, Independent and ſectarian extremes; whereby the unity of the true catholic church is denied, and the presbyterial order and government, the only government which Chriſt hath inſtituted in his houſe, is ſubverted; as alſo, the warrantableneſs and great deſign of Confeſſions of Faith and Catechiſms, as teſts of ſoundneſs in the faith, is thereby overthrown, and a wide door is opened unto a toleration of all hereſy and error, under the old ſpecious pretext of liberty of conſcience. And for all theſe things the Lord may juſtly ſay of us, 'I hearkened and heard, but they ſpake not aright; no man repented him of his wickedneſs, ſaying what have I done? Every one, turned to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battle.'

Together with the abovementioned ſteps of defection and backſliding, a flood of profanteneſs and wickedneſs overſpreads the whole land. All ranks of perſons have corrupted their ways, our nobility and gentry have, for

the moſt part, burſt the Lord's bands aſunder, and caſt away his cords from them; our miniſters, burgeſſes and commons of all ſorts, have turned away backward, and forſaken the holy one of Iſrael; the whole head is ſick, and the whole heart is faint. Many heinous ſins and provocations, againſt the firſt and ſecond table of the law, are to be found among us; ſuch as groſs ignorance of God, Atheiſm, Infidelity, profane mockings at the myſteries of religion; the holy ſcriptures are burleſqued, popiſh errors and deluſions are ſpreading, and the idolatrous maſs is openly frequented in many corners of the land: the name of God is profaned by raſh and ordinary ſwearing in common converſation, and by perjury and falſe ſwearing, eſpecially in trade and commerce; the Lord's day many ways profaned, particularly by frequent and unneceſſary journeying from place to place; many are without natural affection, unruly, diſobedient; the land is alſo defiled with murders, drunkenneſs, prodigality and vanity in apparel, fooliſh jeſtings, riotings and wantonneſs; yea, with open adulteries and uncleanneſs of all ſorts; and ſome profane and ſinful cuſtoms, which have little obtained in former times are countenanced and encouraged, both at court, and in ſome eminent places of the nation; ſuch as the diverſions of the ſtage, maſquerades, balls, and other ſuch ſeminaries of lewdneſs and laſcivouſneſs: likewiſe fraud and injuſtice, in dealings betwixt man and man, are to be found among us; together with oppreſſion, lying, envy, malice, evil ſpeaking, backbiting, falſhood, diſſimulation, and covetouſneſs which is idolatry: likewiſe, of late, an idolatrous picture of our Lord Jeſus was well received in ſome remarkable cities of the nation; as alſo, the penal ſtatutes againſt witches have been repealed by the parliament, contrary to the expreſs law of God; for which a holy God may be provoked, in a way of righteous judgment, to leave thoſe who are already enſnared to be hardened more and more; and to permit Satan to tempt and ſeduce others, to the ſame wicked and dangerous ſnare.

The ſins and provocations of this land, are farther increaſed, by the kind reception that many, both miniſters and people, have given to Mr. George Whitefield, a profeſſed

feſſed member and prieſt of the ſuperſtitious church of England, and the great entertainment that has been given to Latitudinarian tenets, as farther propagated by him and others; whereby any particular form of church government is denied to be of divine inſtitution, and, under a pretence of catholic love, a ſcheme is laid for uniting parties of all denominations in church communion, in a way deſtructive of any teſtimony for the declarative glory of Immanuel, as Head and King of Zion, and for the covenanted reformation of this church and land: for which a righteous God hath juſtly choſen their deluſions, and ſent forth a ſpirit of deluſion among them, in the preſent awful work upon the bodies and ſpirits of men. And though the Lord has been pleaſed in his ſovereign goodneſs, to preſerve a remnant from being carried off by the above dangerous ſcheme and awful deluſion; yet, while endeavouring to teſtify againſt the ſame before the world, we have not been ſuitably exerciſed thereanent before the Lord.

And we deſire through grace, to turn our eyes inward to our own hearts, to ſearch and try our ways to declare our iniquity, to be ſorry for our ſin, and to turn again unto the Lord: For, who gave Jacob for a ſpoil, and Iſrael to the robbers? did not the Lord, he againſt whom we have ſinned, by our unbelief, ſelfiſhneſs, formality, earthlineſs and carnality, falling from our firſt love and ſecurity, by want of tenderneſs, watchfulneſs and ſpirituality, in our frame and diſpoſition, and in our walk and converſation?

And in a particular manner, we deſire to be humbled before the Lord, for our contempt of the glorious goſpel of the Son of God, which we acknowledge to be our ſin, as it is the great ſin and chief guiltineſs of the land wherein we live; that we have not ſuitably improven it, as it is the miniſtration of righteouſneſs for our juſtification, and as it is the miniſtration of the Spirit for our ſanctification. We acknowledge that we are filthy and polluted; and we have it to lament over, that in a very great meaſure, we have not obeyed his voice, we received not correction, we have not truſted in the Lord, we have not drawn near to our God; we have been obſtinate, our neck has been an iron ſinew, and our brow braſs; we have dealt very treacher-

ouſly, and have been tranſgreſſors from the womb. We confeſs our ignorance and great ſhort-coming in the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, in his perſon, offices, bleſſings, and benefits; of the covenant of grace, as it ſtands faſt with him: and of the way of improving Chriſt, and the covenant of promiſe. And we deſire to be humbled for our undervalueing Chriſt, communion with him, and his ſpiritual graces and bleſſings: that we have preferred other things ſo much to Chriſt and his intereſt, and have not given him the pre-eminence above all: that we have been ſo little exerciſed in meditation, ſearching the ſcriptures, ſelf examination, and fervent wreſtling with God by prayer, theſe means of ſecret communion and fellowſhip with him: that we have come ſo far ſhort in receiving Chriſt in our hearts, and improving him, as held forth bythe goſpel, in his fulneſs of grace: and that we have been much eſtranged from the life of faith upon the Son of God, for wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption We acknowledge that we have gone about to eſtabliſh our own righteouſneſs, and have not intirely reſted upon his righteouſneſs alone, as revealed to us in the goſpel; which appears, among many other things, in ſinking fears, ſcarring to apply to Chriſt and the promiſes, and not rejoicing in Chriſt the propitiation, with humility, under a ſenſe of wants, ſhort-comings and failing in duties; which in effect, is a degree of eſtabliſhing a righteouſneſs of our own, and not ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God: and that we have performed duties more in a legal, than in an evangelical, or goſpel way and manner. And we deſire to be humbled for our not making uſe of Chriſt, as we ought, for ſanctification, according to the promiſes of the covenant; as we have not acted in a way of dependence upon him, in all duties and ordinances, and in all the performances of our common Chriſtian calling, and of our particular lawful vocations: for direction, quickening and ſtrength; to mortify our corruptions, and to carry us through our Chriſtian courſe againſt all diſcouragements and temptations.

We deſire to be humbled, that we have not duly made uſe of Chriſt, in approaching to the throne of grace, by prayer, and ſupplication with thankſgiving; that in our ap-

approaches to God, we have not had the eye of faith duly fixed upon Chriſt, nor offered all our ſervice through him as we ought; and that we have not come, with that humble boldneſs and full aſſurance of faith, unto God as a father, wherewith the ſacrifice and interceſſion of Chriſt have warranted us to come.

And we deſire to be humbled, that we have not been duly exerciſed in ſanctifying the Lord's day: particularly, in not being careful enough to avoid carnal converſe in coming to, going from, and during the intervals of public worſhip.

We deſire to be humbled, that in attending upon a preached goſpel, we have not had it more for our end to find communion with Chriſt, a taſte of his goodneſs and excellency, and to be built up in holineſs and comfort, through faith unto ſalvation; that we have not duly prepared our hearts before hand in ſecret, to come with godly fear and reverence, humility, ſpiritual hungring and thirſting after the kingdom of God and the righteouſneſs thereof, and deſiring, as new born-babes, the ſincere milk of the word that we might grow thereby; that we have been ſo little acquainted with receiving the word not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God; that we have not employed the Lord more to teach us inwardly by accompanying outward means with the effectual operations of his holy Spirit; that we have not mixed the word preached with faith, as we ought to have done, believing it with our hearts, and applying the truths preached to ourſelves; and that we have not as we ought, hid the words of Chriſt in our hearts, for after improvement of them, nor employed the Spirit of Chriſt, to bring the word we have heard to our remembrance; and have not taken due pains to meditate upon it in ſecret.

We deſire to be humbled before the Lord that we have not duly made uſe of the ſacraments, as ſeals of the covenant of grace, and of the promiſes there made to us in Chriſt: and particularly, that in offering our children to the Lord in baptiſm, we have not ſet ourſelves, as we ought to conſider and prize the free love and grace of God, which hath prevented us and our ſeed, in providing ſuch a fountain for ſin and uncleanneſs: that we have not been ſuitably exerciſed with our own and our children's

dren's defilement, by original guilt and corruption; nor have been duly concerned that they might be regenerated, united to Chriſt, and get an intereſt in the covenant of grace, and promiſes thereof, ſealed up unto them; that we have not ſuitably applied the covenant and promiſes of it to ourſelves and to our ſeed, and this ſacrament as a ſeal thereof: that at the adminiſtration of this ſacrament to others, we have not been exerciſed as we ought, by joining therein either for our own edification, or in holding up the baptized to God, that he might bleſs his own ordinance to them, and receive them in amongſt his children in Chriſt: that we have not made more conſcience to make known to our children when they came to years of capacity, their baptiſm, the ends and uſe thereof, and the obligation thereby lying upon them, as conſecrated to Chriſt; and that we have not duly made uſe of this ſacrament, all along the courſe of our life, for taking hold of God's covenant, for furthering and ſtrengthning the faith and comfort of our intereſt in God as our God and Father in Chriſt, and for ſtrengthning thro' Chriſt, our reſolutions and endeavours of mortification and newneſs of life.

And we deſire to be humbled, that we have not been at more pains in preparation for partaking of the ſolemn ordinance of our Lord's ſupper, by ſelf-examination, meditation, prayer, and ſupplication, and by renewed actings of faith upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for righteouſneſs and ſtrength, that we have not approached his holy table with ſpiritual hunger and thirſt after Chriſt crucified, and with humble, broken, and contrite ſpirits, as we ought; that we have not duly exerciſed ourſelves in remembering the Lord's death till he come again, and in applying the ſame to ourſelves for peace with God, for mortifying the body of ſin, for working deep repentance and gospel ſorrow on account thereof, and for getting the love of Chriſt more kindled in our ſouls, and our hearts enlarged with greater thankfulneſs, toward him who loved us, and gave himſelf for us: that through prevailing unbelief, we have too often been plunged into legal heavineſs, even when partaking of this ordinance, whereas we ought eſpecially to be rejoicing thro' faith on the propitiation in the death of Chriſt, ſo familiarly ſet forth thereby to us: and that after coming

from

from the Lord's table, we have not walked more closely with God, either in a suitableness to the great and high privileges and mercies bestowed upon us, or the deep and solemn engagements we have there come under: but among other misimprovements of this ordinance, and their departures from the Lord, we have too often given way, either to unbelieving discouragements under the want of sensible enjoyments or to carnal security after being privileged with sensible attainments: and have not otherwise walked before the Lord unto all well pleasing.

We desire to be humbled, that we have not been suitably exercised with the scandals of others, who have been the object of church censures; that we have not upon such occasions, been suitably humbled for the fountain of sin in our own hearts; that we have not mourned in secret places for the dishonour done to God by these scandals; and that we have not, as we ought, pitied and prayed for those who had fallen into the same.

And we desire to be humbled for our great formality in prayer, both in secret and in our families, and that we have not made more conscience of joining with our spirits, in public prayers and praises; that we have employed the Spirit of grace and supplication so little, and have not duly improved that ordinance of prayer, as a mean of communion with God, and for strengthening our faith, and every other grace; and that when we have directed our prayers to God, we have been so little employed in looking up after them for a gracious answer and return.

We desire to be humbled, that we have not walked as becometh the gospel of Christ, but have failed and come far short in the duties we owe to God, to our neighbours, and ourselves. Particularly, we desire to be humbled for our vain thoughts, our idle words, and our overlineſs in divine worship; and our converse has savoured so much of the earth, and so little of heaven and things above; that we have not striven to keep the thoughts of the love of Christ and of the free grace of God in him, upon our hearts so fresh and constant as they should be; in order to keep them watchful, tender, zealous, and enlarged for God his honour and glory; that we have not observed and yielded unto the knockings of the Spirit, whereby Christ has offered

ed to come into our hearts that he might ſup with us and we with him: that we have often quenched the motions of the holy Spirit, whereby he ſtirreth up to duties; and ſtiffled and put away his challanges, which tend to repentance and humiliation; that we have not been tender of his preſence and conſolations, to entertain the ſame; but have grieved him by undervaluing and refuſing them, and by our careleſs walking without attending on his direction and guiding. And we deſire to be humbled for our untenderneſs, in not watching duly againſt carnal company and converſe; in not ſtudying more to recommend religion to others, by an holy, convincing, and edifying converſation; in not ſtudying more faithfully to watch over and admoniſh one another, with meekneſs and love, in being too ready to ſpeak of one anothers infirmities and failings, behind their backs inſtead of obſerving the ſcripture rule, Matth. xviii. 15, 16, 17. And that we have not duly improved ſpiritual company, and ſpiritual exerciſe of ſocial prayer and conference.

As all the above ſins, defections, and backſlidings, are highly aggravated; being committed againſt great goſpel light, and many remarkable appearances of God amongſt us, both in a way of mercy and judgment, in former, as well as in latter times; and notwithſtanding of a great profeſſion on our part, our baptiſmal vows, and our indiſpenſible engagements by the national covenant of Scotland and the ſolemn league and covenant of the three nations: ſo we deſire to be deeply humbled before the Lord for the ſame; to ly down in ſhame before him confeſſing our iniquities, that we with our fathers have ſinned, and that we have done wickedly, and to acknowledge the Lord as righteous and holy, tho' he ſhould caſt us out of his ſight, and ſend in a ſword amongſt us to avenge the quarrel of his covenant. But ſince the Lord is yet waiting that he may be gracious, we deſire to flee unto the blood of Jeſus for the remiſſion of our own ſins, and the ſins of this whole covenanted church and land: and to pray that he may return unto us, and that he may heal our backſlidings and breaches, that glory may yet dwell in our land.

And

And in regard it is the duty of a ſinning people, not only to confeſs and acknowledge their iniquities, and to be humbled for them; but to take hold by faith, of God's gracious covenant revealed to us in the glorious goſpel; avouching the Lord to be our God, according to the tenor of this his covenant, and returning to the Lord our God, from whom we have fallen by our iniquities: and in the faith of his free mercy thro' Jeſus Chriſt, and confidence of that grace and ſtrength promiſed in this covenant of mercy, to engage unto and purſue after reformation, and the advancement of the intereſts of the mediatorial kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which is in, but not of this world, and as ſubſervient to which, the kingdom of providence is committed unto him; and being convinced in our minds, and confeſſing with our mouths, that the preſent and ſucceeding generations in this land, are bound as aforeſaid, by the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the three nations, firmly and conſtantly to adhere unto the doctrine, worſhip, preſbyterial church government, and diſcipline of the houſe of God, laid down in his word contained in our ſtandards, and ſworn to in the ſolemn covenants.

THEREFORE, in obedience to the command of God, conform to the practice of the godly in former times, and according to the laudable example of our worthy and religious progenitors, in the foreſaid covenants.

WE all and every one of us, though ſenſible of the deceitfulneſs and unbelief of our own hearts and however frequently perplexed with doubts and fears anent our actual believing; yet deſiring to eſſay, in the Lord's ſtrength, and in obedience to his command, to glorify God, by believing his word of grace contained in his covenant of promiſe, and in the faith of his promiſe, to devote ourſelves unto the Lord, in a covenant of duty. WE DO with our hands lifted up to the MOST HIGH

GOD, hereby, profeſs, and, before God, Angels and men, ſolemnly declare, that, through the grace of God, and according to the meaſure of his grace given unto us, we do, with our whole hearts, take hold of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as the only propitiation of our ſins; his righteouſneſs, as the only foundation of our acceſs to, and acceptance with God; his covenant of free and rich promiſes, as our only charter for the heavenly inheritance; his word for our perfect and only rule of faith and practice; his SPIRIT for our alone guide, to lead us into all truth revealed in his holy word, unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men. We avouch the LORD to be OUR GOD, and in the ſtrength of his promiſed grace, we promiſe and ſwear, by the GREAT NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD, that we ſhall walk in his way, keep his judgments and commandments, and hearken to his voice: and particularly, that we ſhall, by the Lord's grace, continue and abide in the profeſſion, faith and obedience of the foreſaid true reformed religion, in doctrine, worſhip, Presbyterial church-government and diſcipline; and that we ſhall, according to our ſeveral ſtations, places and callings, contend and teſtify againſt all contrary evils, errors and corruptions, particularly, Popery, Prelacy, Deiſm, Arianiſm, Arminianiſm, and every error ſubverſive of the doctrine of grace; alſo, Independency, Latitudinarian-tenets, and the other evils named in the above confeſſion of ſins. In

In like manner we promiſe and ſwear, that, by all means which are lawful and warrantable for us, according to the word of God, the approven and received ſtandards of this church, and our known principles, we ſhall in our ſeveral ſtations and callings, endeavour the reformation of religion in England and Ireland, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government, according to the word of God; and to promote and advance our covenanted conjunction and uniformity in religion, confeſſion of faith and catechiſms, form of church-government, and directory for worſhip, as theſe were received by this church.

And, in regard we are taught by the word of God, and bound by our covenants, national and ſolemn league, to live together in the fear of God, in love to one another, and to encourage one another in the work and cauſe of the Lord; and that denying all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world: therefore, in a dependence on the Lord's grace and ſtrength, we, in the ſame manner, do promiſe and ſwear that we ſhall, in our ſeveral places and callings encourage and ſtrengthen one another's hands, in purſuing the end and deſign of this our ſolemn oath and covenant; and that we ſhall endeavour a life and converſation becoming the goſpel of Chriſt: and that in our perſonal callings and particular families, we ſhall ſtudy to be good examples to one another of godlineſs and righteouſneſs, and of every duty

that

that we owe to God and man; and that we ſhall not give up ourſelves to a deteſtable indifferency and neutrality in the cauſe of God; but denying ourſelves, and our own things, we ſhall, above all things, ſeek the honour of God and the good of his cauſe and people; and that, thro' grace, forſaking the counſels of fleſh and blood, and not leaning upon carnal confidences, we ſhall endeavour to depend upon the Lord, to walk by the rule of his word, and to hearken to his voice by his ſervants. In all which, profeſſing our own weakneſs, we earneſtly pray to God, who is the father of mercies, through his Son Jeſus Chriſt, to be mercitul unto us, and to enable us by the power of his HOLY SPIRIT, that we may do our duty unto the praiſe of his grace in the churches. *Amen.*

Extracted——

JOHN POTTS, *Pr. Cls.*

ACT of the Aſſociate Presbytery, anent the terms of Miniſterial and Chriſtian Communion.

At EDINBURGH February 14. 1744.

THE presbytery conſidering the grievous and growing courſe of defection, by the preſent generation in theſe lands, from the truths, cauſe and inſtitutions of Chriſt revealed in his holy word, and maintained in our reformation ſtandards; as alſo, the dreadful prevalence of Latitudinarian principles, for uniting perſons of all denominations in church communion, to the overthrow of the government of Chriſt's houſe, and the manifeſt prejudice of all his precious truths; and conſidering likewiſe the many loud calls at this day, on the foreſaid and other accounts, to ſtate, more expreſly, the terms of miniſterial and Chriſtian communion agreeable to the word of God, the principles of this church and the duty of the Lord's remnant in theſe lands: therefore, for theſe and other weighty

weighty reaſons, the presbytery did, and hereby do, reſolve agree and determine, that the renovation of the national covenant of Scotland, and the ſolemn league and covenant of the three nations, in the manner now agreed upon and propoſed by the presbytery, ſhall be the term of miniſterial communion with this presbytery; and likewiſe of Chriſtian communion in the admiſſion of people to ſealing ordinances, ſecluding therefrom all oppoſers, contemners and ſlighters, of the ſaid renovation of our ſolemn covenants: and moreover, as the presbytery judge that much tenderneſs and lenity is to be uſed with the weakeſt of Chriſt's flock, who are lying open to light, and minting to come forward in the ſaid cauſe, that they may not be at firſt inſtance, ſecluded from ſealing ordinances; ſo they agree, that all ſuch are to be ſecluded who, after deliberate pains taken for their information, with all due meekneſs and patience, ſhall be found, by the ſeſſion or ſuperior judicatories they are in ſubjection unto, to be neglecters and ſhifters of this important moral duty, or not to be, themſelves, in the due uſe of means, for light and ſatisfaction thereanent.

Extracted——

JOHN POTTS, *Pr. Cls.*

ACT of the aſſociate Presbytery, anent the order to be obſerved, in renewing the Covenants.

At EDINBURGH, February 15. 1744.

WHEREAS the presbytery have, by a late act, condeſcended upon a ſolemn acknowledgment of the public ſins and breaches of our ſolemn covenants, with a bond containing a ſolemn profeſſion of our faith and engagement unto the duties contained in them, appointing that theſe covenants be renewed in the ſaid acknowledgment and bond by all ſuch as ſhall willingly offer themſelves unto the Lord, in this ſolemn work and duty: they agree and reſolve, that in renewing them accordingly the order following be obſerved.

1 That the foreſaid ſolemn acknowledgments of the public ſins and breaches of our covenants, ſhall be publicly joined in and made; whereupon theſe covenants ſhall be publicly ſworn and ſubſcribed in the foreſaid BOND.

2. That none ſhall be admitted to ſwear or ſubſcribe the covenants but ſuch as have a competent meaſure of knowlege, are free from all known ſcandal, and have a converſation

tion becoming the goſpel; as theſe only can make a credible profeſſion of willingly offering themſelves unto the Lord, in this work.

3. That after the people in acceſſion to this presbytery have had occaſion to peruſe, conſider and deliberate upon, the act for renewing the covenants; the ſeſſions in the ſeveral aſſociate congregations under the presbytery's inſpection, (whether ſuch as have a miniſter ſettled among them, or ſuch as are occaſionally conſtitute by a miniſter of this presbytery) ſhall ſeverally fix on a convenient day for public faſting and humiliation, upon the grounds and reaſons laid down in the ſolemn acknowledgment of the public ſins and breaches of our covenant; as alſo for ſwearing and ſubſcribing the covenants, in their reſpective bounds; and that intimation hereof ſhall be made unto the congregations, ſeverally, on the Lord's day immediately preceding.

4. That, upon the ſaid day of faſting and humiliation (two miniſters of this presbytery being preſent, in vacant congregations; and the miniſter, in a ſettled congregation being aſſiſted by one of his brethren;) after prayer and preaching of the word, the national covenant of Scotland ſhall be firſt read, and next, the ſolemn league and covenant of the three nations: that then, the foreſaid acknowledgement and bond ſhall be likewiſe read; that, after all theſe are read, one of the miniſters ſhall in prayer acknowledge and confeſs the breaches of our covenants, and ſupplicate the Lord for his pardoning mercy and gracious preſence, in the ſolemn action to be gone about: that, immediately after prayer, the BOND ſhall be again read, by the miniſter; that, during the reading thereof, all preſent, who are willing and qualified as above, for coming under the oath of God, ſhall ſtand, with their right hands lifted up to the Lord, and that then the ſolemn action ſhall be concluded with exhortation and prayer.

5. That, the day immediately following one of the miniſters ſhall conveen the people, for prayer, and exhortation from the word, unto ſtedfaſtneſs in the oath and covenant of the Lord; and that, when public worſhip is over, the covenants ſhall be ſubſcribed, as above, in preſence of the miniſters.' Extracted——

JOHN POTTS, *Pr. Cls.*

ACT

ACT of the ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY,

CONTAINING

A Confeſſion of the Sins of the Miniſtry, with an anſwerable Profeſſion of Faith, and Engagement to Duties; to be entred into by Miniſters, before their Renewing the Covenants.

At Dunfermline, the third day of November, One thouſand ſeven hundred and forty three years.

WHICH day and place the preſbytery being met, they had under conſideration the draught of A Confeſſion of the ſins of the miniſtry, with an anſwerable Profeſſion of Faith, and Engagement to duties; to be entred into by miniſters before their renewing the Covenants.

The ſaid draught being formerly, and at this diet, undergone ſundry readings, amendments, and enlargements: the presbytery did by an unanimous vote, as hereby they do, agree unto and approve of the ſame; the Tenor whereof follows.

A

CONFESSION OF THE SINS OF THE MINISTRY,

With an anſwerable

PROFESSION OF FAITH, AND ENGAGEMENT TO DUTIES.

To be entred into by Miniſters before their Renewing the Covenants.

WE all and every one of us, ſeriouſly conſidering, That our land is filled with ſin againſt the holy One of Iſrael, and that a cloud of divine wrath is hovering

hovering over our heads; that our hand, as miniſters of the goſpel, has been deep in the tranſgreſſion; that we have had no ſmall acceſſion to the drawing on theſe judgments which are upon us; and that a holy God may juſtly proceed in his controverſy with us: and conſidering, that we are called of God to acknowledge our iniquity, in having tranſgreſſed againſt the Lord our God; to ſearch and try our ways and turn again to the Lord: and, as the prieſts, the miniſters of the Lord, to weep between the Porch and the Altar, and to ſay, Spare my people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen ſhould rule over them.

We therefore deſire, with an eye of faith to the Lord Jeſus who is the great High prieſt over the houſe of God, and who is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins, to acknowledge; and in a dependence upon the promiſed influence of his Spirit and grace, we do confeſs and acknowledge;

Not only that in our original ſin, we are guilty of Adam's firſt ſin, deſtitute of original righteouſneſs, having our natures univerſally corrupted, that, by unbelief, we have deſpiſed the noble plant of Renown, who is more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey; not believing in God, nor truſting in his ſalvation, as we ought; and that as to other actual ſins, our treſpaſs is grown up unto the heavens; innumerable evils have compaſſed us about; and our iniquities are gone over our head, as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for us.

But alſo in a ſpecial manner, as to the important office of the miniſtry, to which the Lord has condeſcended, of his grace to call us; we confeſs and acknowledge that we have not, with due faithfulneſs, taken heed to the miniſtry which we have received, to fulfil it; we have not faithfully kept his charge, nor walked in his ways: and therefore he might juſtly have turned us off from judging his houſe, and keeping his courts.

We acknowledge, that we were too negligent in improving prayer and fellowſhip with God, opportunities of a lively miniſtry, ſo far as in providence we were favoured therewith, and alſo other means afforded us: for attaining the practical knowledge and experience of the myſtery of the

the goſpel in ourſelves, before we preached it to others. And tho' we hope that, thro' grace, we are made in ſome meaſure, ſingle as to our end, in entring upon the holy miniſtry; yet we deſire to be humbled, that we then knew ſo little of the love of Chriſt, conſtraining us, and that we did not breathe more fervently after the glory of God, and the gaining of ſouls: that, after entering upon this great and weighty work, we attain to ſo little of a life of faith upon the Son of God; that we ſo greatly want nearneſs to God, and take up ſo little of him, in reading meditating and ſpeaking of him; that we have watched ſo little over our own hearts, and have been ſo careleſs in ſelf ſearching, and in reflecting upon our own ways, that conviction might have a thorough work upon us, and iſſue thro' grace in our perſonal reformation, laying aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us: and that we have been ſo ſelfiſh in all that we have done, acting much from ourſelves, and for ourſelves, and being ſo little acquainted with ſingleneſs of end and aim, and a dependance upon Chriſt in the whole of our walk and way.

And we deſire to be humbled before the Lord, for our deadneſs of ſpirit, after all the ſore ſtrokes of God upon the land: that ſome of us were not timeouſly enough aware of Mr. George Whitefield, a prieſt of the church of England and the danger of his way, nor timeouſly enough employed in warning the Lord's people againſt the ſame: and that all of us have been too remiſs in our endeavours to prevent the ſad effects which have attended and followed upon his miniſtrations, particularly in this land: that we have been too little humbled for the entertainment which hath been given him: that we have been too little affected before the Lord, with the bold attack made upon the order and inſtitutions of the Lord's houſe by the Latitudinarian principles which he has propagated, and with the awful deluſion wherein he has been an inſtrument of the Lord's wrath unto this generation; that we have not been duly exerciſed in ſearching into the grounds of the Lord's controverſy this way in crying unto him, that he would pity his heritage, and rebuke the devourer for their ſakes, caſting the falſe prophet and the unclean ſpirit out of the land.

We desire to be humbled, that we have made so little conscience of humiliation and fasting by ourselves apart and in our families, that we might mourn for our own and the land's guiltiness and great backsliding betaking ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, and his blood of the New Testament, shed for the remission of the sins of many: that we have not duly laid to heart the decayed state of religion in all the churches of the reformation, and the heavy sufferings of the small remnant in France and other places who desire to cleave to the Lord; that we have not been suitably concerned for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, by the downfal of Antichrist and Mahomet, and the in bringing of the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentiles: as also, that we have not suitably lamented over the bars which have been laid in the way of the propagation of Christianity and the kingdom of Christ, by the sinful neglects and unchristian behaviour of these professed protestants, who live contiguous unto or trade with Papists, Mahometans, and Heathens.

And we desire to be humbled, that the confessions we have made of our own sins, and the sins of the land have had their rise so little from faith in Christ, and have been so little accompanied with gospel repentance and reformation: that, though we have endeavoured to search out and testify against public faults and sins, yet we have seen so little of the plague of our own hearts, and the innumerable evils that are there, attaining so little gospel humiliation on that account; that we have not been suitably humbled by the consideration of the falls of gracious men, and mourned and prayed for them in the manner we ought to have done; that we have not duly observed particular rods and deliverances, nor improved them, for the honour of God and edification of ourselves and others; and that we have been so little exercised in mourning for our unbelief and the corruption of our nature, and in habitual longing to be delivered from the body of sin and death, the bitter root of all other evils.

We also desire to be humbled before the Lord, that in our conversation and walk, with and before our flocks and others, our converse has had so little savour of Christ,

and

and has been ſo little ſeaſoned with ſalt, that it might miniſter grace to the hearers; that we have not ſtudied more to improve opportunities of doing good to others: that we have not ſanctified the Lord's day, as we ought to have done in being duly habituated to ſpiritual converſe about Chriſt and the great things of God's law, ſo neceſſary to be practiſed by Chriſtians, and eſpecially by miniſters of the goſpel upon that holy day, and in improving it for communion with God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord: that we have not duly mourned for the ignorance, unbelief, and miſcarriages of the flocks committed to our charge: that we have not dealt ſo faithfully with them as we ought, in reproving them for their faults: nor have taken due pains on the ignorant and profane, for their good.

And we deſire to be humbled, that, in the diſcharge of miniſterial duties, we have not been more on the mount of communion with God, in preparing for public work: that we have not employed Chriſt, and drawn virtue from him by faith, as we ought to have done: for enabling us to preach in demonſtration of the Spirit and of power, but have truſted too much to our own preparation: that we have not, with that faith and fervency which was neceſſary, recommended to God by prayer that matter we have brought forth, to be quickned by his Spirit to his people: that in the time of the delivery of his meſſage, the eye of faith has not been more ſingly and habitually directed towards the Lord, for the breathings and influences of his holy Spirit from whoſe operation alone proceedeth the fruit and increaſe of goſpel adminiſtrations; and that, after preaching the goſpel, we have not wreſtled ſo fervently with God in prayer, as we ought that the ſeed of the word ſown might be bleſſed, receiving the firſt and latter rain of the Spirit, to make it fruitful in the hearts and lives of them who hear it. And we deſire to be humbled for our exceeding great unſkilfulneſs to ſet forth the excellency of Chriſt, in his perſon, offices and the unſearchable riches of his grace, with the new covenant as it ſtands faſt in him, and the way of living by faith upon him; that, in preaching Chriſt, we have ſpoken too much from mere ſpeculative or common knowledge, and too little

from practical knowledge and experience, or a real impreſſion of his infinite excellency upon our own hearts, and with too little remembrance and reverence of him, in whoſe name and by whoſe authority we ſpeak, in whoſe preſence we ſtand, and to whom we muſt give an account; that we are too little affected with the deep concern which our own ſouls, and theſe of our hearers, have, in what of the Lord's words, we ſpeak: that, when preaching anent the awful ſigns of Chriſt's leaving the land, we have wanted the due brokenneſs of heart, and have not ſtirred up ourſelves to take hold of him, nor preached with bowels of compaſſion to them who are in hazard of periſhing eternally, through the rejecting the counſel of God againſt their own ſouls; and that we have not ſtudied to profit more by the doctrine of the goſpel, delivered by ourſelves or others.

We deſire to be humbled, that we have wreſtled ſo little with God, for his bleſſing on the ſeals of his covenant, Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper; for having ourſelves and people prepared unto the diſpenſing and receiving of them; and for having our guilt and theirs, contracted in holy miniſtrations, purged and done away by the blood of the everlaſting covenant. We deſire to be humbled, that in viſiting we have known ſo little how to ſpeak, by the Spirit of Chriſt, a word in ſeaſon to all and every one; particularly, to the weary and exerciſed in conſcience, or to the afflicted with outward diſtreſſes, loſſes and croſſes, for the improving of theſe trials to their ſpiritual advantage; or to dying perſons, with a view to their great change, and their appearing before God the great Judge of all. We deſire to be humbled; that, in Catechiſing, we have not prepared our hearts, or wreſtled with the Lord for a bleſſing unto that ordinance, as we ought: whence it has proceeded in a great meaſure, that the people have been ſo little profited by it; and that we ſtudy too little meekneſs, tenderneſs, and patience, in dealing with our people upon that and other occaſions. We deſire to be humbled that in the exerciſe of diſcipline, we have not been ſuitably affected with the diſhonour done to the Lord's holy name, and the hurt done to precious ſouls, by the public ſins of ſcandalous perſons brought before the church judicatories;

tories; that we have not made a due uſe of this ordinance of church cenſure, for the gaining of ſouls: but have too much ground to charge ourſelves with being lukewarm, remiſs and formal upon the one hand, or, on the other; of failing in point of meekneſs and tenderneſs towards offenders; and that we have not been at more pains, before ſteps be taken for inflicting ſevere cenſures upon them, to endeavour their recovery from the error of their way, by laying before them the evil of their ſin from the word of God, and exciting them to repentance, by motives drawn from the authority of Chriſt, his grace and love manifeſted in the whole of the goſpel, and particularly in this ordinance of diſcipline. And we deſire to lament that in our Presbyterial meetings, tho' conſtitute in the great name of the Lord, yet we have not been duly exerciſed in looking unto and waiting upon the Lord, with ſingleneſs, humility and confidence; and that we have not uſed due freedom and faithfulneſs, as before the Lord, in watching over, admoniſhing and comforting one another: all which we have reaſon to fear, hath contributed to provoke the Lord to refuſe the carrying on his work more powerfully among our hands, and the making mountains in the way thereof more ſpeedily become a plain.

We deſire to be humbled before the Lord, for the deep hand we have had in the provocation wherewith the Lord is provoked, by the public defections, of miniſters and judicatories: as we have not been valiant for the truth upon the earth, in appearing with that open freedom, zeal and conſtancy, for the cauſe of Chriſt, and againſt the many diſhonours done to him, as alſo the wrongs and violence committed upon his truths, intereſt and people, which we ought to have uſed; but have many times, thro' fear, or ſloth, or carnal prudence, or from ſome ſelfiſh conſideration, hid, as it were, our faces from him, ſo that, when he was deſpiſed, we eſteemed him not. We have, Iſſachar like, couched under the burden and reckoned ourſelves exonered by condemning the evils of the time, without being ſuitably humbled before the Lord, and mourning in ſecret places for them, or bearing ſufficient teſtimony againſt them in the courts of judgment.

Yea,

Yea, ſome of us, through miſtake and neglect of due enquiry, were left to be partakers in the public defection by taking the oath of abjuration: which ſince has been matter of humiliation to us in the ſight of the Lord, on our diſcovering and reflecting upon its inconſiſtency with our covenants, national and ſolemn league; as we acknowledged at the time of our acceſſion to the aſſociate preſbytery. Moreover, we deſire to be humbled for our having been ſo far left of the Lord, all of us who were then in the miniſtry, that we were not watchful and ſuitably jealous for the Lord of hoſts, and for the cauſe of truth, when many indignities were done unto the ſame, both in palliating error, ſcreening the erroneous, and condemning truth, in the year 1717; and in condemning truth, and venting error, in the years 1720 and 1722. We deſire to be humbled before the Lord that all of us who were then in the miniſtry were ſo far left, that we gave no ſuitable nor adequate teſtimony to the cauſe of truth, in the year 1729, when the proper, true and ſupreme deity of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt was impugned and denied; and no due cenſure was inflicted upon the broacher of theſe groſs errors and blaſphemies; as we acknowledged in the privy cenſures before the aſſociate presbytery a little after the firſt erection thereof. And we deſire to be humbled, that ſome of us were left to faint ſinfully in the year 1733, when ſuffering ourſelves to be ſo far blinded, by the ſeeming deciſion of a meeting of the presbytery at Dunfermline at Edinburgh, for the inrollment of an intruder among them as to drop our teſtimony againſt his being inrolled; through our not adverting either to the unlawfulneſs of the conſtitution of that meeting of preſbytery, which all the members were not warned to attend; or the ſinfulneſs of the deciſion, though the presbytery had been lawfully conſtitute; and that ſome of us, when having opportunity to witneſs for the Lord, againſt the blaſphemous and infidel ſchemes of profeſſor Campbel, were far from that freedom, faithfulneſs and conſtancy therein, which we ought to have uſed; as we gave not any ſuitable and adequate teſtimony, againſt theſe pernicious and damnable principle, in the judicatories.

We

We acknowledge, that, for all theſe our ſins, (and innumerable others, relating both to our private capacities, and to our miniſterial office and character; for who can underſtand his errors?) a righteous and holy God might juſtly, not only cauſe us to ceaſe from feeding his flock, but caſt us out of his ſight, and ſhut up his tender mercies making the waves and billows of his vindictive wrath to paſs over us for ever; if he dealt with us according to the demerit of our ſins, and tenor of the covenant of works.

BUT, in a dependence upon the gracious influences of the HOLY SPIRIT of promiſe, and according to the meaſure of grace given unto us, we fly for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us, even upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which is our hope, as God hath ſet him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood: and we believe, that, thro' the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall be ſaved, that he will heal our backſlidings, and love us freely; and that he will turn again, have compaſſion upon us, ſubdue our iniquities, be merciful to our unrighteouſneſs, and caſt all our ſins into the depths of the ſea. And in a dependence upon the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, we reſolve to walk more cloſely with God as Chriſtians and miniſters, and to watch againſt the above and all the like ſins and evils; going in the ſtrength of the Lord, and making mention of his righteouſneſs, even of his only.

Extracted——
JOHN POTTS, *Pr. Cls.*

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